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ABSTRACT

In a previous report, the author critiqued the 1988 Silver Burdette & Ginn elementary social studies series (Silver Burdett & Ginn Social Studies), treating it as a representative example of what has been called the de facto national curriculum in elementary social studies. The present report begins with brief critiques of three other market-share series: the 1987 Macmillan Social Studies series, the 1987 Ginn Social Studies series, and the 1986 Holt Social Studies series. It concludes that the latter two series are superior to the former two as vehicles for teaching elementary social studies for understanding, appreciation, and application, but it also notes that all of the series have significant drawbacks and thus are not consistently or unambiguously distinctive as sets of curriculum materials. Various distinctive materials are available in social studies, however, in the form of supplementary materials that focus on limited topics. Most of these are targeted for the secondary grades, but some have been developed for (or at least are usable in) the elementary grades. Several sets of these distinctive materials are critiqued in the areas of economics; government and law, history; and critical thinking, reasoning, and decision making. A 27-item list of references and an appendix containing the framing questions used in this research are included. (Author/DB)

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Elementary Subjects Center
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DISTINCTIVE CURRICULUM MATERIALS IN K-6 SOCIAL STUDIES

Jere Brophy

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Jere Brophy

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Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects

The **Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects** was awarded to Michigan State University in 1987 after a nationwide competition. Funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, the Elementary Subjects Center is a major project housed in the Institute for Research on Teaching (IRT). The program focuses on conceptual understanding, higher order thinking, and problem solving in elementary school teaching of mathematics, science, social studies, literature, and the arts. Center researchers are identifying exemplary curriculum, instruction, and evaluation practices in the teaching of these school subjects; studying these practices to build new hypotheses about how the effectiveness of elementary schools can be improved; testing these hypotheses through school-based research; and making specific recommendations for the improvement of school policies, instructional materials, assessment procedures, and teaching practices. Research questions include, What content should be taught when teaching these subjects for understanding and use of knowledge? How do teachers concentrate their teaching to use their limited resources best? and In what ways is good teaching subject matter- specific?

The work is designed to unfold in three phases, beginning with literature review and interview studies designed to elicit and synthesize the points of view of various stakeholders (representatives of the underlying academic disciplines, intellectual leaders and organizations concerned with curriculum and instruction in school subjects, classroom teachers, state- and district-level policymakers) concerning ideal curriculum, instruction, and evaluation practices in these five content areas at the elementary level. Phase II involves interview and observation methods designed to describe current practice, and in particular, best practice as observed in the classrooms of teachers believed to be outstanding. Phase II also involves analysis of curricula (both widely used curriculum series and distinctive curricula developed with special emphasis on conceptual understanding and higher order applications), as another approach to gathering information about current practices. In Phase III, models of ideal practice will be developed, based on what has been learned and synthesized from the first two phases, and will be tested through classroom intervention studies.

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Abstract

In a previous report, the author critiqued the 1988 Silver Burdett & Ginn elementary social studies series (Silver Burdett & Ginn Social Studies), treating it as a representative example of what has been called the de facto national curriculum in elementary social studies. The present report begins with brief critiques of three other market-share series: the 1987 Macmillan Social Studies series, the 1987 Ginn Social Studies series, and the 1986 Holt Social Studies series. It concludes that the latter two series are superior to the former two as vehicles for teaching elementary social studies for understanding, appreciation, and application, but it also notes that all of the series have significant drawbacks and thus are not consistently or unambiguously distinctive as sets of curriculum materials. Various distinctive materials are available in social studies, however, in the form of supplementary materials that focus on limited topics. Most of these are targeted for the secondary grades, but some have been developed for (or at least are usable in) the elementary grades. Several sets of these distinctive materials are critiqued in the areas of economics; government and law; history; and critical thinking, reasoning, and decision making.

DISTINCTIVE CURRICULUM MATERIALS IN K-6 SOCIAL STUDIES

Jere Brophy[1]

The Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects is engaged in research and development on elementary-level teaching of mathematics, science, social studies, literature, and the arts, with particular emphasis on the teaching of these subjects for understanding, appreciation, and application. Various phases of the work have involved review and synthesis of scholarly literature, interview of experts, inspection of state- and district-level policy statements, critique of curriculum materials, case studies of exemplary teaching, and improvement-oriented intervention efforts. Similar questions are being addressed using similar methods in each subject area.

The analyses of commercially available curriculum materials have been guided by a common set of framing questions designed to produce comprehensive and detailed analyses (see Appendix). The analyses consider not just the content of the student text but the larger curriculum that would be enacted if the teacher not only used the text and any provided ancillary materials (worksheets, tests) but also followed the manual's suggestions for lesson development and follow-up activities and assignments. Thus, the framing questions call for analysis of the goals and intended outcomes of curricula, the content selection and representation choices, the coherence of content explication in the student text, the suggestions made to the teacher about questions to ask

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[1]Jere Brophy, University Distinguished Professor of teacher education at Michigan State University, is co-director of the Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects. The author wishes to acknowledge and thank Roger Niemeyer for his comments on an earlier draft; Fran Minnick, Nancy Bredin, Tom Kreft, and Linda Schramm for allowing him to observe the Mini-Society program and June Smith for her assistance in manuscript preparation.

the students and about the kinds of classroom discourse that should occur, the nature of the activities and assignments provided with the text or recommended to the teacher, the purposes and nature of the evaluation methods supplied or recommended, and the nature and extent of the rationales and other explanatory material in the teacher's manual.

Where possible, we have analyzed two types of commercially available curriculum materials in each subject area: (a) one or more of the most widely adopted K-6 curriculum series (based on consensus among recent scholarly reviewers of such materials, we expected that most of these market-share series would be ill-suited to teaching school subjects for understanding, appreciation, and application) and (b) other K-6 series and supplemental materials that, whether widely adopted or not, are distinctive because they have been developed with an emphasis on teaching the subject for understanding, appreciation, and application. In some subjects (notably mathematics and science) there are not only supplemental materials but also complete K-6 curriculum series that are distinctive in this regard. This has not been the case recently in social studies, however. Both scholarly critiques and our own examination of market-share series published from 1986 to 1989 indicate that these series are all similar to one another in adopting a citizenship transmission, cultural literacy approach that offers a primarily factual coverage of topics sequenced within the expanding communities organizational framework that starts with the child and moves gradually outward in space and backward in time. The emphasis is on communicating cultural literacy facts, developing various skills (using maps, globes, charts, and graphs, conducting research, organizing information, and writing reports), and inculcating citizenship values and dispositions. Typically, there is not much emphasis on structuring knowledge around powerful ideas drawn from the disciplines, teaching skills as strategies to use

in the process of applying the knowledge, thinking critically about value-laden aspects of the content, or applying such critical thinking within decision-making contexts.

Analyses of Commonly Used Series

The 1988 edition of the Silver Burdett & Ginn (SBG) series (Silver Burdett & Ginn Social Studies, Morristown, NJ: Silver Burdett & Ginn) was selected for detailed analysis because it is one of the most representative and popular of these widely adopted series that have constituted a de facto national curriculum in elementary social studies. A comprehensive critique of SBG is presented in a previous report in this series (Brophy, 1990). That report points out that, although SBG contains some good units and individual lessons and offers certain general program strengths (particularly its graphics and its program for teaching map skills), its potential effectiveness as the basis for an elementary social studies curriculum is limited by problems that recent critiques have commonly noted in curriculum materials for school subjects in general (Elliott & Woodward, 1990; Tyson-Bernstein, 1988) and for social studies in particular (Beck & McKeown, 1988; Beck, McKeown, & Gromoll, 1989; Larkins, Hawkins, & Gilmore, 1987). Commonly mentioned problems that were found in SBG included (a) emphasis on breadth of coverage over depth of development of ideas; (b) presentation of information as disconnected parades of facts rather than as networks of connected content structured around important ideas; (c) too many paragraphs that are unclear because the material is too compressed and elliptical; (d) frequent disruption of the flow of content by inserted vignettes or skills exercises that have no connection to the rest of the unit; (e) excessive space allocated to pictures and graphics that are not related to important ideas developed in the text; (f) general lack of

coherence and reader friendliness in the exposition of content; (g) needlessly thin, redundant, and superfluous content in the K-3 texts; (h) sanitizing of content and avoidance of controversy throughout the series; and (i) general lack of integration of the skills content with the knowledge content.

The Brophy (1990) analysis of SBG also identified several additional problems that have not yet received much attention in the scholarly literature: (a) The teacher's manual did not provide much rationale or explanation, either for the program as a whole or for individual units or lessons, to help teachers focus on important social education goals and to teach individual lessons with awareness of where they fit within the big picture; (b) the stated goals did not appear to be the primary considerations driving curriculum development; (c) few of the activities labeled "critical thinking" or "application" actually involved these cognitive processes; (d) the texts emphasized a narrowly American purview rather than embedding the content within a global context; (e) there was little attention to students' preexisting knowledge or misconceptions; (f) there was not enough content in the early grades but too much in the later grades; (g) many of the caption questions focused on irrelevant details of photos or illustrations instead of connecting them to important social education ideas; (h) the suggested questions focused on recitation of miscellaneous facts rather than on structuring reflective dialogue or other thoughtful discussion of the content; (i) there was not enough use of data retrieval charts and other mechanisms for analyzing and synthesizing content in ways that promote understanding; (j) many of the suggested activities focused on trivial aspects of the content, did not promote progress toward significant social education goals, were unnecessarily time-consuming or complicated, or otherwise were not feasible or appropriate; (k) many of the skills exercises and most of the activities that ostensibly promoted integration across subjects or tie-ins

with other subjects did not have significant social education value and did not belong in a social studies curriculum; and (1) the provided test questions were mostly limited to factual recognition and retrieval items that required little or no critical thinking, development of an argument, sustained writing, or other higher order applications. Brophy concluded that SBG and similar social studies series are limited in value as learning resources for students, not only because of the problems in content selection and representation and in expository coherence and reader friendliness that various scholars have noted in criticizing the student texts but also because of problems in the teacher's manual and in the ancillary materials that limit the likelihood that the material will be taught with emphasis on important social education goals and key concepts or will be followed up with teacher-student discourse and learning activities that would help students to understand, appreciate, and apply what they are learning.

Subsequent analyses have focused on three additional commonly used 1986-1989 elementary social studies series--the 1987 Macmillan series (Macmillan Social Studies, New York: Macmillan), the 1987 Ginn series (Ginn Social Studies, Lexington, MA: Ginn), and the 1986 Holt series (Holt Social Studies, New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston). These will be discussed only briefly here, rather than analyzed in detail as in the Brophy (1990) report on the 1988 SBG series, for two reasons. First, closer analyses confirmed our earlier impression that these series are more similar to SBG than different from it. Consequently, most of what might be said in detailed analyses of these series would simply repeat what was already said about SBG in the Brophy (1990) report and summarized previously in the present report. Second, any newly prepared comprehensive critiques of commonly used 1986-1989 materials would be obsolescent. The publishers bring out new editions of their series every year or two.

Often these reflect nothing more than very minor editing, but sometimes they involve substantial revision or even creation of new materials. Because of increasingly widespread discontent with the materials they were publishing in the 1980s, and especially because of the pressures put on them by newly developed curriculum guidelines and related policy initiatives advanced in the late 1980s by the State of California (Freeman, 1990), most of the leading publishers are preparing or already offering substantially new elementary social studies series. We will monitor these new series to see if any of them appear to be distinctive as tools for teaching social studies with an emphasis on understanding, appreciation, and application. If so, we will provide comprehensive commentary on such series in future reports. For now, we offer only brief commentary on three additional 1980s market-share series.

The 1987 Macmillan Series

This series is extremely similar to SBG. Within this context of similarity, there are two consistent differences. First, the photos and illustrations, although not as sharp and attractive as those in SBG, are connected more consistently to the information developed in the lessons. Better connections are established both through choice of the content shown in the photos and illustrations and through choice of suggested questions to address to the students about them. The second consistent difference is that, compared to SBG, the Macmillan series offers teachers more suggested questions and other guidance concerning classroom discourse but fewer suggested follow-up activities and assignments. Thus, if teachers followed the suggestions in the manuals, students taught with the Macmillan series would spend more time in teacher-led recitation and discussion but less time in seatwork or other follow-up activities than would students taught with SBG.

At first glance, one might infer from these differences that the Macmillan series provides the basis for enacting a more coherent curriculum than does SBG. However, the potential advantages inherent in richer discourse guidance and better connection between the verbal and the visual content is not realized in greater coherence of impact. The content is still a mostly disconnected parade of facts, and many of the questions suggested for structuring teacher-student discourse amount to intrusions of isolated skills practice exercises rather than opportunities for critical reflection on and application of the content. Given these problems and the fact that the Macmillan series is not as good as SBG in certain other respects, there does not appear to be any significant overall difference between these two series.

The 1987 Ginn Series

This series offers several advantages over SBG and the 1987 Macmillan series. Instead of just a few pages of hype, the introductory sections to the teachers' manuals provide reasonably detailed information about the educational goals and philosophy that guided development of the curriculum. These include two key features not emphasized in the other series: an emphasis on important content that is worth learning and a deemphasis on breadth of coverage in favor of treatment of important ideas in more depth. The materials not only claim these features in the introductory sections but display them throughout the series, at least in comparison to the other series. Thus, the Ginn series is better structured around important ideas.

The Ginn series is also more coherent in other respects, because there are more connections between different sections of the knowledge content, between the knowledge content and the skills content, and between the ideas developed in the text and the ideas that form the content basis for the

exercises in the workbook. The Ginn series addresses a narrower range of content than the other series (there is less material on rules, laws, and government, for example), but what it does cover is organized more clearly around key ideas and developed with more coherence and depth.

The content is also developed with more emphasis on understanding and application. It uses key ideas to talk about the social experiences and activities of people rather than presenting disconnected social science definitions and generalities, and the questions and activities focus on applying the content rather than on practicing skills in isolation. Most of the suggested questions and activities would be useful for helping students to analyze or synthesize the content, to think critically about it, or to extend the lesson in some other useful way. Although far from perfect, the Ginn series is much better than the other two in these regards.

The content is relatively bland but clear and well developed. It is both more realistic about the social world and less larded with the vague "happy talk" that often substitutes for substantive content in primary-grade textbooks. The geographic and social content emphasizes commonalities and general principles over the exotic, and the history content emphasizes economically based explanations for general trends rather than stories of individuals or romantic or chauvinistic content. The graphics and inserts are mostly relevant to the key ideas being developed and often excellent.

Although the material is structured around key ideas drawn from the social sciences, it is written with the child's point of view in mind. Many of the extended examples focus on or are told through the eyes of children, and coverage of various topics often emphasizes things of special interest to children (although as with the other series, this is sometimes carried too far, especially in geographic sections). Boxed inserts focusing on children are

used effectively to socialize citizenship values and attitudes. Many of these inserts focus on children taking civic action, such as an urban child who initiated a program to help the homeless and a rural child who initiated events that led to establishment of a library in the local community.

Despite its many positive features, the Ginn series shares many of the same weaknesses displayed by the other two series and thus falls short of being truly distinctive as a vehicle for teaching elementary social studies for understanding, appreciation, and application. Despite its reduction in breadth of coverage in favor of depth of development of important ideas, it is still cluttered with a great deal of trite and disconnected content. Some content linkages appear forced; many of the special inserted features on technology, the environment, celebrations, or citizenship are intrusive and of questionable value; and many of the questions and activity suggestions amount to little more than isolated skills practice. Certain potentially useful content is absent or minimized (government and law, examples of "land to hand" connections in developing products from raw materials). Suggested activities for special learners are mostly pointless. Suggested test questions focus mostly on low-level knowledge recognition or recall. The fourth-grade text is notably weaker than the others, being less clearly structured around important ideas and containing considerable content that is redundant with content covered at other grade levels (perhaps because the publishers expect that many schools will concentrate on state history in fourth-grade social studies and avoid or minimize their use of the fourth-grade text from the series). Finally, the series contains frequent errors in composition and editing, many of them apparently caused by mistakes introduced when collating material retained from earlier editions with material prepared for the latest edition.

The 1986 Holt Series

Another market-share series that offers several distinctive advantages as well as some familiar disadvantages is the 1986 Holt series. One immediately noticeable distinctive feature of the 1986 Holt series is that it contains much more content--there are more words and sentences per page, especially in the K-3 texts. Inspection of this content revealed that it is not only lengthier but also more substantive and challenging than the content found in the other three series. Instead of vague happy talk or condescending emphasis on the exotic or the childish, it treats the content as important information and treats the students as serious learners. It provides considerably more information and especially a great deal more explanation than the other series.

The 1986 Holt series follows the expanding communities organizational structure and addresses the same kinds of topics addressed in the other series, but it offers better coverage of most topics not only through its more extensive text but also through its more complete instructions to teachers about developing each lesson. Instructions to the teacher include many useful suggestions about additional information to provide to students, key points to emphasize, and ways to structure content-related discourse around questions or construction of lists or charts. Many of the suggested questions focus on cause-and-effect relationships, comparison and contrast of examples, or other processing of the content in ways that promote understanding. Many of the suggested activities call for application of the content to examples in the local neighborhood or community or to the students' own lives outside of school. The questions and activities tend to focus on key ideas rather than minor details, to emphasize functions and relationships rather than just definitions and isolated facts, and to call for ideas and opinions rather than just recall of information.

Most of the suggested lesson introductions should be effective for getting students to think about the topic, and most of the suggested lesson development plans should be effective in personalizing or applying the material to the students. There is good use of photographs and customized artwork and charts. Even the workbooks that accompany the text are worth noting, because the activities contained within them usually would be useful for extending students' social knowledge, not just providing practice in vocabulary or isolated skills.

Of the four 1986-1989 market-share series that I inspected, the 1986 Holt series offers the best combination of good content in the student texts with good guidance to the teacher about how to structure lessons and provide additional input to students, how to structure discourse through questioning, and how to extend the lesson through useful follow-up activities. Students should both learn more new information and be exposed to less redundancy and trivia if taught what the 1986 Holt series than with the other three market-share series reviewed.

However, enthusiasm about the 1986 Holt series must be tempered by at least two sets of concerns. First, the material is challenging, both in terms of the reading level of the prose in the student texts and in terms of the conceptual level of that prose and of the questions and activities suggested in the teachers' manuals. It is possible that some of these text sections, questions, or activities are more demanding than many students at the designated grade levels can handle. In the absence of systematic field testing data (either for this series or for any of the others), it is difficult to judge.

Second, along with its many advantages, the 1986 Holt series embodies certain important disadvantages. Foremost among these is that it emphasizes breadth of coverage in addition to depth of development of important ideas, so

that it contains more content than teachers are likely to be able to cover in a given school year. While it is true that most of the lesson development guidelines and suggested questions focus on important ideas, it is also true that the texts contain a great deal of information that is trivial or tangential to these important ideas and that coherence is frequently interrupted by skills exercises or other insertions that do not connect directly with the content flow. Also, in addition to a number of directly relevant and usually quite good suggestions for follow-up activities, the teachers' manuals contain numerous suggestions for ostensible lesson extensions that tie in with other school subjects, and many of these have little or no social education value.

Thus, the 1986 Holt series suffers from many of the same problems of clutter and disruptive intrusion of extraneous content and isolated skills exercises that were noted in SBG (Brophy, 1990). In addition to adding sheer bulk to the textbooks, this problem makes it more difficult for students to retain focus on the key ideas and see the continuity across lessons and units (which is there, for the most part, although it is forest that is easily lost for the trees). The 1986 Holt series would benefit from a reduction in breadth of coverage in favor of focus on depth of development of key ideas, as well as an emphasis on some of the other reader-friendliness features built into the 1987 Ginn series. Such changes would also reduce the demands made on the students' reading-to-learn abilities, a change that would be especially useful for this highly informative but also highly demanding series.

Conclusions Regarding Market-Share Series

Of the four market-share series that I inspected, the 1986 Holt series and the 1987 Ginn series provide a significantly better basis for teaching elementary social studies for understanding, appreciation, and application than

the 1987 Macmillan series or the 1988 Silver Burdett & Ginn series. Even so, the two former series had some notable drawbacks and the two latter series had certain strengths. Clearly, a new series that combined the best features of these 1986-1989 market-share series, while also avoiding their drawbacks, would be a much more powerful basis for good social studies teaching than even the best of those series are now. In particular, such a series would combine the positive content coverage and lesson development guidelines features of the 1986 Holt series with the emphasis on depth over breadth, the structuring around important ideas, and the use of questions and activities to apply knowledge rather than practice skills in isolation seen in the 1987 Ginn series.

There is some reason for optimism concerning the likelihood of development of such series, because a broad range of critics of 1980s market-share series agreed on these and other criticisms and their implications for improvement. Also, certain states and school districts, led by California, have begun replacing their lengthy and disconnected lists of knowledge- and skills-coverage requirements with briefer and more integrated statements of elementary social studies goals and curriculum guidelines. These changes may create changed market pressures that will allow or even encourage publishers to produce more coherent curricula.

However, current developments may also produce additional market pressures that will exacerbate existing problems or create new ones of their own. Most of the major publishers are currently moving to place more emphasis on higher order thinking skills and cooperative learning in developing their social studies series and also to augment the regular textbook content with inserted selections from children's literature. If these new emphases are incorporated into the curriculum development process in ways that cause them to be implemented only where they fit most naturally and can be used effectively

to extend lessons in useful ways, they may result in improved materials. However, if they are treated as ends in themselves and injected into the curricula in disconnected and intrusive ways, they will have the same kinds of counter-productive effects that attempts to integrate across subject matter, inject basic skills exercises, and provide teaching suggestions for mainstreamed students had on the 1980s series.

Analyses of Distinctive Materials

Inspection of the 1986-1989 market-share elementary social studies series identified some that offered certain noteworthy strengths, but none that were unambiguously distinctive as tools for teaching elementary social studies for understanding, appreciation, and application. However, inspection of various supplementary materials did identify several that were distinctive in this regard. A few of these had been nominated by experts consulted for advice, and others were located through the catalogs published by the Social Studies School Service, a clearinghouse for distributing books, video cassettes, computer software, and activities packages for use in K-12 social studies courses. Only a small percentage of the supplementary materials advertised in these catalogs were targeted for the elementary grades, and most of these were workbooks limited to vocabulary drill and isolated skills practice. Some of these materials, however, were designed to engage students in thinking critically and making decisions about social education content, and thus would promote the teaching of social studies for understanding, appreciation, and application. Most of the rest of this report is devoted to critiques of these distinctive supplementary materials.

These distinctive materials are clustered in the areas of economics; government and law; history; and critical thinking, reasoning, and decision

making. No such materials were found for sociology, where the few available supplementary materials are targeted for the secondary grades. No distinctive supplementary materials were found for geography, either, even though a great many supplementary materials targeted for the elementary grades are available for this subject. The problem is that these materials emphasize isolated practice of map skills and place geography facts, offering little opportunity for critical thinking, decision making, or authentic geographical reasoning or problem solving. This includes the popular "Where in the World is Carmen SanDiego?" (1985) software program and its derivatives.

No recently developed distinctive materials targeted for the elementary grades were found in anthropology, either, although the anthropologically based Man: A Course of Study (MACOS) program (Education Development Center, 1970) continues to be used in many classrooms. Designed for use in the middle grades, MACOS relies on novelty, incongruity, and contrast to stimulate students' curiosity and cause them to address the content in an inquiry-oriented mode. It frequently introduces topics by presenting application problems and inviting students to formulate guiding principles and generate possible solutions on their own before reading further. Thus, students might be invited to explore questions such as, "How does one get through territory where there are strong predators?" before reading information on this topic. Or, they might be asked to inspect maps indicating the physical features of an area and then to speculate about the locations of the capital city and major seaport, the economic emphases likely to develop in particular regions, or the placement and functions of major highways or railroads.

MACOS is difficult to evaluate because little research is available on it and because attention to its pedagogical features and effects has been obscured by political controversy over its emphasis on evolution and its depictions of

cultural practices that some consider immoral or unsuitable for presentation to children. Among social educators, some believe that the MACOS materials are among the best available, others find them useful but unremarkable, and still others criticize them for being too focused on disciplinary inquiry at the expense of more basic citizen education or focus on contemporary societies and issues. Evaluation data on MACOS suggest that students enjoy it and achieve at levels comparable to those of students using more traditional curricula (Cole & Lacefield, 1980; Cort & Peskowitz, 1977). Since the MACOS materials have been well known for more than 20 years, they will not be described further here.

We now turn to recently developed distinctive supplemental programs, beginning with those in economics.

Mini-Society

The Mini-Society program was recommended to me by several social educators as an example of an elementary social studies program that was distinctive as a vehicle for teaching for understanding, appreciation, and application. It was the only program mentioned consistently by the experts that I consulted. For that reason, and also because I had the opportunity to observe the program being implemented in a local school, I developed a detailed critique of it using the framing questions shown in the Appendix.

The Mini-Society manual is entitled Mini-Society: Experiencing Real-World Economics in the Elementary School Classroom (Kourilsky, 1983a). The subtitle provides an apt description for this economics-based program. The author elaborates on this idea on page 4 by noting that learning by doing is the crucial, pivotal element in the Mini-Society approach to instruction, which is described as "a self-organizing, experience-based approach to teaching

youngsters about economics, government, career options, consumer issues, and values clarification."

The program is embodied in this teacher's manual--there are no student texts. It is composed of two interwoven components: semi-structured experience (in which students establish and participate as members of a society that features its own money system and economy) and the formal debriefing of ideas derived from this experience. Mini-Society has much in common with role play and simulation approaches but the economic and civic activities that the students engage in are quite real, and they do so as themselves rather than as fictional characters or role players. Thus, although it is simplified and scaffolded for use with elementary students, Mini-Society is better described as a series of realistic practical application experiences than as role play or simulation. Kourilsky identified the following as essential characteristics of the program: (a) It involves students personally, not just vicariously; (b) it enables them to learn actively, not just passively; and (c) it requires them to make business and policy decisions that have real consequences which they will bear.

To implement Mini-Society as recommended, teachers must be prepared to commit significant time to it. The manual calls for periods of 35 to 60 minutes per day, at least three times per week for a minimum of 10 weeks. Thus, Mini-Society is not just a relatively minor supplement to the regular social studies program. If implemented as recommended, it would require 25-50% of the time that is allocated to social studies in most elementary classrooms, and thus would substitute for a significant portion of the regular curriculum.

Mini-Society as Presented in the Manual

A. Goals. The goals of Mini-Society are selective, focusing primarily on economics concepts and principles but also including government, career option, consumer issue, and value-clarification goals that relate to the focal economics goals. These goals are stated in general terms early in the manual, and then are operationalized in later chapters in the form of introductory lists of objectives and concluding checklists of what should be accomplished during each stage in the development of Mini-Society.

The goals emphasize not just knowledge and skills but related values, attitudes, and citizen participation dispositions. The debriefing component is designed explicitly to foster conceptual understanding, and the "learning by doing" nature of the experience component couches learning within an applications context. The students engage in critical and creative thinking, problem solving, and decision making as they establish and run businesses, vote on policy issues, and participate in other Mini-Society activities.

The curriculum was clearly designed around a network of key ideas drawn from economics, and the application emphasis and debriefing guidelines are designed to help ensure that students will appreciate the connections among these key ideas and their relationships to economic experiences in life outside of school. Students who attain the knowledge goals of the curriculum will possess an integrated and functional basic knowledge of economics.

Through its commitment to learning by doing, Mini-Society emphasizes procedural and conditional knowledge goals as much as propositional knowledge goals. In fact, the program calls for quickly involving students in key experiences without much advance structuring around concepts or principles, saving most of the latter for the postexperience debriefing discussions. Events that can be expected to occur during the planned activities enable students to

experience directly the implications of many of the key principles. However, experiences relating to other key principles are less likely to occur, so it is up to the teacher to recognize the need to take action to stimulate such experiences. Also, the degree to which students develop formal knowledge of key principles and their associated concepts, as well as the degree to which they learn to use this knowledge strategically and with metacognitive awareness, will depend on the extent and nature of the debriefing discussions that the teacher leads them through following the activities.

The program's attitudinal and dispositional goals are concentrated on participation in a market economy couched within a democratic society. Overt goals include development of a sense of efficacy as a thoughtful economic risk taker and various attitudes and dispositions relating to resolution of policy issues through democratic processes (as members of the society, students vote on taxes, government services, and various other policy issues). Cooperative learning goals are not stated explicitly, but Mini-Society provides numerous opportunities for students to work cooperatively, both as participating members of the society as a whole and as business partners with one or more classmates. Also, although the emphasis is on individuals pursuing their own economic self-interests, the program does call for students to consider and support the public good and to consider assisting individuals who experience economic misfortune. It also promotes the value that there are some things that we should do for reasons of courtesy, morality, or social obligation rather than because we get economic rewards for doing them.

The stated goals clearly drove the development of Mini-Society. In many respects it is a model example of a curriculum designed to accomplish limited but specific goals. As a set, the goals appear to be appropriate to the learning needs of the specified target population of 7- to 12-year-old students

(third through sixth graders), although more so for students at the higher end of this age range than for students at the lower end. In the absence of a student text or even a list of key concepts and principles, the degree to which students acquire conceptually based knowledge and retain it in well-articulated form will depend heavily on the extent and nature of the debriefing activities structured by the teacher.

B. Content selection. Given the goals of the curriculum, the selection of content is clearly coherent. The program is built around basic economics concepts and principles treated as an interconnected network. The content tends to be appropriate for use with elementary students, because it concentrates on aspects of economics that affect the individual citizen acting as provider and consumer of goods and services and it approaches these by involving the students in realistic concrete experiences. For the most part, the program avoids macroeconomics and abstract concepts and principles that are not easily exemplified through individual economic experiences.

Because the content selection focuses on basic economics concepts and principles (e.g., the rationing function of price, wealth defined not as the amount of money that one possesses but as the amount of goods and services that that money will buy, advertising as a way to increase demand for one's product or services), students should develop an appreciation for economics as a body of knowledge and related skills that has practical application to their lives outside of school. The emphasis is not on economics as an abstract social science but instead on its consumer and citizen participation aspects. The latter include both the entrepreneurial activities involved in starting and running a business and the value analysis and decision-making activities involved in clarifying and voting on policy issues (e.g., Mini-Society rules).

Content selection is faithful to the discipline of economics and represents its substance and nature validly, at least within what is consistent with the emphasis on consumer and citizen participation aspects. The program begins with activities designed to develop understanding of scarcity as the central economic problem of all societies. Students learn that scarcity is the problem posed when limited resources are balanced against relatively unlimited wants, and they study the advantages and disadvantages inherent in the various economic systems that societies develop to allocate their scarce resources. Then they are challenged to create a Mini-Society based on market mechanisms designed to handle the resource allocation problem by arranging for members to pay for scarce resources with something of value.

Initially the society includes a name, a flag, a currency system, civil servants (money cutters who cut printed sheets into individual bills, paymasters who distribute the money to individuals), and some established mechanisms through which citizens can earn money by meeting criteria of good citizenship or accomplishment (as a way to introduce money into circulation). Students can use this Mini-Society money to purchase items from classmates willing to part with the items in exchange for the special money, but the main focus of development of Mini-Society at this point is to encourage students to begin businesses that will offer goods or services in exchange for Mini-Society money. Incentives to do so include not only the opportunity to earn Mini-Society money through entrepreneurial creativity and energy but also the need to acquire money in order to pay various taxes and fees that are levied to pay the civil servants for their work, pay the teacher for needed supplies and consultant advice, pay the principal rent for use of the space, and so on. Once several businesses begin and a thriving market economy develops, students begin to have experiences (business successes and failures, conflict between

partners, indecision about how much to charge for one's product or service, etc.) that provide grist for debriefing discussions.

The debriefing discussions, supplemented by teacher explanations and concept development questions and activities, are designed to develop student understanding of such topics as goods and services, supply and demand, selecting a location for a business, advertising, keeping records (expenses, sales, profit or loss), obtaining capital (savings, stock sale, loans), auctions, opportunity cost, cost-benefit analysis, competition (price vs. nonprice, fair versus unfair), monopoly, shortages and the rationing function of price, market price, price floors and subsidies, functions of banks (checking and savings; how banks make money), barter, money supply and inflation, comparative advantage, and planned versus market economy. In addition to these economics concepts, there are likely to be debriefing discussions on policy and value issues such as the trade-offs between working conditions and pay, what constitutes fair versus unfair business practices, bankruptcy, welfare, the public good, and protection through copyrights and patents. An early-arising policy issue, likely to be debated and resolved through a vote, is whether the society should pay its civil servants from tax money or rely on volunteers. If the Mini- Society includes establishing a formal government (this is optional), there also will be debriefings on political science concepts such as democracy versus dictatorship, the branches of government and their functions, and legal contracts and their implications.

The learning-by-doing approach ensures that conceptual knowledge is linked to procedures and applications, including applications to life outside of school. Mini-Society provides practical experience in how market economies work.

Although laudable in many ways as a simplified yet valid way to introduce elementary students to economics concepts and principles, Mini-Society incorporates some questionable assumptions about prior knowledge, both in teachers and in students. The manual says that it contains all of the information that teachers will need to teach the program successfully, but I believe that this is true only for the very small minority of elementary teachers who have significant backgrounds in economics. Similarly, the manual implies that the program has been designed for use with 7- to 12-year-old students, but the suggested activities vary considerably in scope and complexity and many of the examples (especially in the chapters on debriefing) allude only briefly to rather abstract concepts that are not developed systematically. The manual is good at providing teachers with information about what kinds of ideas (both accurate ideas and misconceptions) children are likely to have about the issues addressed and how they are likely to respond to many of the questions and activities. Nevertheless, it strikes me as overly optimistic in its implications about the kinds of learning that can be expected from students (especially younger students and students taught by teachers without much background in economics). The manual contains sufficient information to enable teachers to establish and maintain the experience component of Mini-Society, but I do not think it contains enough information to ensure that they will systematically develop key concepts and principles in their debriefing discussions.

Content clearly was selected with students' interests, attitudes, and dispositions to learn in mind. The activities incorporated in Mini-Society are interesting and exciting, and the concepts and principles to be developed relate directly to these experiences and help students to understand them. There are no special provisions for student diversity linked to status characteristics such as gender, race, ethnicity, or culture, although the activities

allow for a great deal of individual autonomy in making decisions about how to participate (whether to start a business or to work for someone else, what kind of business or work role to adopt, how to spend one's earnings, etc.).

C. Content organization and sequencing. Organization of the content is something of a problem, even though the entire curriculum is included within a 200-page manual. The first part of the manual is organized in terms of the sequential steps that the teacher takes in preparing the students for, launching, and then maintaining the Mini-Society. The emphasis in these chapters is on what to do and how to do it, without much emphasis on the concepts and principles to be developed. The latter material is contained in subsequent chapters dealing with the debriefing discussions. Thus, the material on the experience component and the material on the debriefing component are presented in separate sections, without much connection between them.

Furthermore, the material in the chapters on debriefing is organized according to major topics (economics, government, and values analysis) rather than according to the stages in the development of Mini-Society in which the issues addressed are most likely to become salient. Yet, within each of these chapters, the material is organized according to case studies representing 20 commonly occurring triggering events rather than according to a logical sequence of concepts and principles. As a result, it is difficult to move back and forth between the experience chapters and the debriefing chapters, and the debriefing chapters appear to offer only a representative selection instead of a complete and systematically organized treatment of key concepts and principles.

In summary, the first part of the manual is sequenced effectively to guide teachers through each major stage in establishing and maintaining a Mini-Society. The second part of the manual, however, is not sequenced in ways that

make it easy to correlate with the first part. In combination with the absence of a student text and of a content scope and sequence chart, this problem makes it likely that teachers who lack sufficient background in economics will be successful in establishing a workable Mini-Society that provides the desired experience component to their students but less successful in handling the debriefing component in ways that develop the desired levels of understanding of the implied scope and sequence of content.

D. Content explication in the text. This section of the framing questions does not apply directly to Mini-Society because there is no student text. Content is explicated (actually elicited through questioning, as much as possible) by the teacher during the post-experience debriefing discussions. Here, the teacher leads the students through an examination of recent Mini-Society experiences, and in the process helps them to analyze and synthesize these experiences using economics concepts and principles.

The manual provides good guidance to teachers on how to present or elicit good explanations of key concepts and principles. The timing and nature of these explanations are linked to recently occurring Mini-Society experiences, and the suggested definitions and explanations are phrased in ways that should make them meaningful to the students. If teachers heed the advice given in the manual and make use of all or at least most of the questions and activities suggested for concept development, most of the key ideas will be addressed in depth and with attention to students' prior knowledge and misconceptions. Similarly, skills will be developed within application contexts and used as tools for extending understanding rather than practiced in isolation (e.g., students are often required to use mathematics during Mini-Society activities but always in the context of conducting cost-benefit or pricing analyses or keeping business records). Because of the emphasis on learning by doing, the

program is unusually strong in developing connections between propositional knowledge, procedural knowledge, and conditional knowledge.

In summary, the manual provides some very good guidance to teachers about what key concepts and principles to develop and how to develop them through debriefing discussions following relevant Mini-Society experiences. However, the degree to which the intended curriculum ultimately will be experienced and retained by students will be limited by two key factors: (1) the degree to which teachers (usually with minimal economics backgrounds) are able to understand and willing to implement at least the minimal requirements for accomplishing the intended curriculum and (2) the degree to which the combination of the experience component and the debriefing discussions (perhaps reinforced with worksheets and other activities) will be sufficient to support students' learning and retention of key concepts and principles. I fear slippage between the intended and the enacted curriculum due to the first factor, and slippage between the enacted and the experienced curriculum due to the second factor. Thus, I believe that the program would benefit not only from a more complete and systematic handling of the debriefing component in the teacher's manual but also from the addition of a student text or at least a study guide that focused on each of the key concepts and principles that should be included in what the author would view as the core curriculum.

E. Teacher-student relationships and classroom discourse. The program calls for a great deal of teacher-student discourse. Much of this occurs during the teacher-structured debriefing discussions and related concept development activities, but the experience component also includes a great deal of discourse in which teachers consult with individual students or partnerships about their business plans or work with the class as a whole in democratic problem-solving or decision-making meetings. Although the teacher retains

ultimate authority concerning what activities will and will not be allowed in Mini-Society and is the person charged with structuring debriefing discussions around key economic concepts and principles, the manual calls for the teacher to act primarily as a resource person and discussion leader rather than a lecturer or fount of authority and wisdom. The emphasis is on engaging children in experiences prior to considering the key concepts and principles they will be learning, and the debriefing discussions stress eliciting insights through questioning rather than teaching through didactic lecturing. Questions are designed to focus students' attention on salient experiences and help them to develop explanations for and generalizations from what occurred. Thus, most questions are authentic ones calling for thoughtful reflection, not just retrieval of facts or definitions from memory. The emphasis is on building understanding of economic principles and processes, so that recommended questions tend to be open-ended ones calling for causal reasoning or other forms of higher order thinking rather than closed-ended ones calling for convergent correct answers.

Similarly, the value aspects of the program emphasize analysis and clarification, not inculcation. Rather than tell students what to think or do, the teacher leads them through analyses of the trade-offs involved in alternative courses of action. Primarily through questioning, the teacher helps students to explore the economic and other advantages and disadvantages embodied in proposed solutions to emergent problems and, as much as possible, leaves it to the students to resolve these problems through democratic decision making. Sometimes this will mean living (at least temporarily) with group decisions that the teacher believes are unfair (i.e., they arbitrarily place certain students at an advantage over others) or are likely to lead to problems that the students have not foreseen and that eventually will force them to develop a

different solution. Teachers who are accustomed to inculcating values may have difficulty switching from their accustomed role of values arbiter to the role of values clarifier as envisioned by Kourilsky. For example, the manual calls for teachers to help clarify for students that, from a purely economic standpoint, sharing and cooperation are options that may or may not make sense (rather than being "obviously" good things to do) and that there may be economic incentives for engaging in such practices as stealing, counterfeiting, declaring bankruptcy, cheating on one's partners, or paying graft for competitive business advantages. It should be noted that the manual goes on to suggest that teachers lead students through analyses that consider these activities not only in terms of individual economic incentives but also in terms of larger issues such as the public good and fairness to other individuals. Still, the implication is that these analyses should lead to personal or group decision making by students rather than to resolution through teacher statements of what is right or appropriate.

In summary, the guidelines concerning teacher-student discourse clearly emphasize thinking and reasoning, problem solving, and decision making rather than recitation or drill, and this is true of value and policy issues as well as the more purely academic content focusing on economics concepts and principles. Teachers accustomed to a reading/recitation/seatwork approach to curriculum and instruction and to a values-inculcation approach to citizen socialization will find it difficult, at least at first, to implement Mini-Society in the spirit intended by Kourilsky.

F. Activities and assignments. As a set, the activities clearly provide students with a variety of opportunities for exploring and communicating their understanding of the content--this is an activities-based program. There is a good mixture of activity forms and of cognitive, affective, and citizen

participation aspects, and they provide numerous opportunities for students to engage in critical and creative thinking, problem solving, decision making, and other higher order applications. Given effective debriefing, the activities amount to a sensible program of appropriately scaffolded progress toward the stated goals.

In addition to the general model of involving students in an ongoing society in which they engage in business activities and make both personal financial and civic policy decisions, the Mini-Society manual suggests numerous useful activities such as experiencing shortages of supplies or other aspects of scarcity and then deliberating about and making decisions on a fair or appropriate way to handle the problem, filling out job applications requiring them to give reasons why they would be well qualified for the civil service jobs available in the society (treasurer, paymaster, money cutter), conducting market surveys to assess demand for a product or service that they are considering building a business around, assessing the relative profitability of alternative business ideas, engaging in various banking transactions, keeping records of business activities, planning and constructing advertisements for their businesses, participating in auctions, and participating in democratic decision-making meetings (or optionally, in the various roles embodied in whatever form of government is adopted) to debate and make decisions about social policies. Another useful form of activity is the value analysis discussion in which students address such questions as whether or not it is fair or appropriate to make false or misleading claims in one's advertising, capitalize on a classmate's idea by opening a competing business, give special privileges or discounts to one's friends, engage in graft as a way to obtain competitive advantage for one's business from governmental leaders, or steal from one's employer or cheat one's partners.

None of the suggested activities could be described as fundamentally unsound in conception because they lack relevance or amount to pointless busywork. All are linked to developing understanding of and ability to apply key economics concepts and principles, and many provide for opportunities to bring misconceptions to the surface and confront them. Once again, however, the extent to which students develop conceptual understandings and learn to interpret their experiences using economics principles depends heavily on the extent and nature of the debriefing discussions that follow the activity experiences.

Some of the activities (e.g., constructing demand curves and using them along with other information to make decisions about pricing and about the probable profitability of a contemplated business venture) would be difficult for many if not most of the students in the 7-12 age range to complete successfully without considerable assistance from the teacher. Also, some of the debriefings depend on experiences that involve noticing trends occurring in the society as a whole (inflation, changes in supply or demand). Even at the level of Mini-Society, these trends are more difficult to notice and understand than one's own personal experiences as an entrepreneur or consumer. Furthermore, some of them may not occur at all unless the teacher has been very successful at getting the students to stay within clear limits on how much they can bring in materials from the home or in other ways introduce resources from outside the system (many of the economics principles developed in Mini-Society are based on the assumption that a fixed amount of resources is available, and this assumption starts to break down when students bring unauthorized additional resources into the system). Thus, some of the recommended activities involve conceptual or procedural complexities that might make them difficult to implement successfully, either with the class as a whole or with certain students.

Many Mini-Society activities involve integration with other subject areas. In particular, a great deal of mathematics is involved in planning for and keeping records of business activities; and consumer aspects of mathematics are involved in such activities as shopping for the best bargains, lending or borrowing money, or writing checks. There also are opportunities to apply language arts and writing skills, especially in developing advertisements for one's businesses. Knowledge and skills from these other subject areas are used naturally in the process of implementing Mini-Society activities--there are no instances of forced or artificial integration.

G. Assessment and evaluation. The manual provides good guidance to teachers who wish to evaluate the degree to which they are implementing Mini-Society guidelines successfully and the degree to which their students are acquiring the intended understandings and dispositions. Each of the chapters on how to set up the experience component opens with a list of objectives and concludes with a checklist describing what the students should have accomplished before moving on to the next stage. Similarly, each section within the chapters on debriefings lists objectives that should be accomplished (phrased in terms of student outcomes).

In addition to this material embedded in the chapters, an appendix includes an integrated list of all of the objectives, a 22-item multiple-choice test featuring knowledge and comprehension questions, two mathematics tests covering mathematical knowledge and skills used in the program, and a list of 21 "journal questions" that teachers should address if they wish to keep a journal in which they record salient events of the Mini-Society as it unfolds in their classroom. Thus, the manual does a good job of providing teachers with criteria to use in determining whether or not they have implemented the

experience component of the program successfully and, to a lesser extent, the degree to which students are learning key economics concepts and principles.

The emphasis is on assessment of the level of implementation of the program and its general effects on the class as a group, not on the grading of individual students. Although tests are provided, the tenor of the manual as a whole suggests that Kourilsky would emphasize qualitative assessment based on the degree to which the teacher succeeded in establishing a functioning Mini-Society featuring a lively market economy that provided students with the desired learning experiences, as well as in following up on these experiences with effective debriefing discussions that helped the students to use key economics concepts and principles to understand what they were learning.

Because of the learning-by-doing nature of the program, the Mini-Society activities themselves function not only as learning experiences but as assessment devices, for the students as well as for the teacher. There is no simple one-to-one correspondence between mastery of key principles and success in developing one's business and pushing one's agenda in the society, but students who have mastered the basic principles are likely to draw up better plans and implement them more successfully than other students. Because money is involved and decisions have serious consequences (poor business decisions can lead to loss of income and anticipated purchasing power, even bankruptcy), students are motivated to learn and likely to pay attention to the feedback that they get following their decisions. Thus, students will get realistic feedback about the degree to which they have understood and correctly applied basic principles. Similarly, teachers will be able to assess progress not just according to test scores but according to the quality of the business and consumer decisions that students make during the experience component of the

program and the quality of the policy debates and answers to questions that the students provide during the debriefing discussions.

H. Directions to the teacher. The Mini-Society manual contains instructions on how to establish and manage each phase of Mini-Society, along with case-based examples of debriefing discussions; a few reinforcement worksheets; various test items; and samples of currency designs, contracts, job application forms, and the like. The manual does not contain systematic exposition of key economics concepts, but it refers to a companion publication (Kourilsky, 1983b) that does provide such information.

The suggestions to the teacher clearly flow from a coherent model of teaching and learning economics that is intended to foster higher order thinking. The degree to which the model is manageable will vary with the teacher and the setting. To implement the model as intended, teachers not only will have to be willing to make the significant time commitment that Mini-Society requires but will have to have access to sufficient and appropriate space to set up and run the businesses (preferably a gymnasium or large utility room rather than an already crowded classroom), sufficient economics knowledge and understanding of the program to be able to structure the debriefing discussions effectively, sufficient personal confidence and classroom management skills to be able to handle the sometimes controversial content and the frequently free-wheeling and noisy processes involved, and parental support both in tolerating the controversial aspects and in cooperating with the established participation rules (e.g., limits on what students are allowed to bring from home as salable goods or other business resources). Mini-Society is not for the timid.

The introductory part of the manual provides an adequate rationale for the program but does not include a scope and sequence chart or even a list of

key concepts and principles. Although most chapters begin with a brief introduction and statement of objectives, the organization of material in the manual is parallel in many ways to the design of Mini-Society itself: Initial emphasis is placed on experiences (instructions telling the teacher what to do and how to do it), with "debriefing" (discussion of the concepts and principles that each phase of the program is meant to develop) occurring only afterwards. This might be sufficient for teachers with a good grounding in economics, but other teachers will probably have to read the manual several times before things begin to fit together clearly. Most teachers should study the manual along with the companion volume that provides an overview of economics (Kourilsky, 1983b) before attempting to implement Mini-Society. Better yet, they should take a course or attend an inservice program that provides support and opportunities to practice implementing Mini-Society, as well as supplementary materials such as lists of key concepts and principles.

A strength of the manual is the experience-based information that it provides to teachers about students' probable knowledge and misconceptions about each issue addressed, along with their likely responses to questions and activities. The manual offers a great deal of engagingly written and practically useful guidance about how to respond to various possibilities that may develop. However, locating the information may sometimes be a problem because the debriefing sections are organized by topic (within the general headings of economics and consumer education, government and law, and values analysis and clarification), whereas the rest of the manual is organized in terms of the sequence of steps to follow in setting up and running Mini-Society.

The manual also gives reasonably good guidance about the kinds of teacher- student discourse that should occur, although it does this primarily through examples based on cases of debriefing discussions developed in response

to 20 commonly occurring Mini-Society experiences. For each topic addressed in the debriefing sections, there is a statement of objectives, an explanation of key concepts and misconceptions that should be clarified, and a suggested set of questions and activities. Even when taken together, however, these sections offer only selected examples, not a complete and sequenced curriculum. Thus, it is left up to the teacher to recognize and follow through on opportunities to develop economics concepts and principles in response to events that did or did not occur during recent Mini-Society activities. Given the very limited economics backgrounds of most elementary teachers, this is a dubious strategy.

Except for the limited guidance concerning debriefing discussions, the manual is quite effective in providing information about how to structure activities and scaffold student progress on them. It is clear about what main things are to be accomplished at each stage, providing both general principles and lists of representative examples.

No guidance is given about grading or credit for participation in discourse or activities. A few reinforcement exercises and test items are provided, but it is left to the teacher to decide whether and how to use these resources. An appendix offers useful guidance about how teachers might evaluate the effectiveness of the Mini-Society developed in their classroom. It includes an integrated list of all of the objectives stated in the various chapters in the manual (which teachers could use as a checklist of accomplishments), tests of economics concepts and principles and of related mathematics concepts and skills, and framing questions for use by teachers who wish to keep a journal.

Although Mini-Society is complicated, the suggested materials are easily accessible to teachers. In addition, many of the suggestions about how to impose boundary conditions around what will and will not be allowed to occur in

Mini-Society appear to have been motivated by a desire to minimize the complexity and expense involved.

In general, the manual appears to be sufficiently clear and detailed to give teachers the information they need to initiate and sustain Mini-Societies with their students. It does not provide them with the basic economics knowledge that they would need to teach the program most effectively, however, nor with sufficiently systematic guidance about how to structure the debriefing discussions that are so crucial to accomplishment of the program's goals. Thus, although the manual would be sufficient to enable teachers to structure Mini-Society experiences that would be valuable in a number of ways for elementary students, these experiences would be unlikely to accomplish all of the goals or achieve the levels of sophistication reflected in some of the examples given in the manual unless the teachers were considerably more knowledgeable about economics as a discipline than most elementary teachers are likely to be. The companion volume (Kourilsky, 1983b) should be helpful in this regard, but perhaps not enough to make up for the manual's lack of systematic guidance about how to handle the program's debriefing component.

Observation of Mini-Society in Action

Although it is unconventional and complex and it requires the cooperation of the principal and the parents, Mini-Society is feasible for implementation in Grades 3-6 and deserves consideration as a supplement to (actually, a substitute for some of) the standard social studies (and to a lesser degree, mathematics) curriculum. The manual is based on information gathered on over 1,000 implementations and is replete with practical advice. Furthermore, research on the program (unfortunately not discussed in the manual) has shown that it has achieved significant success in teaching the key economics concepts and

principles it was designed to develop (Cassuto, 1980; Kourilsky & Ballard-Campbell, 1984).

Furthermore, the program delivers on the manual's claim that children enjoy participating in Mini-Society and tend to become absorbed in its features. I was able to observe an implementation recently in a school in which Mini-Society has been included in the fifth-grade curriculum for the last several years. It was clear even in advance of the beginning of Mini-Society that both the teachers and the students were looking forward to it because it had become institutionalized as an annual "big event." Many students had heard about it from older siblings and were eager to participate themselves. Once Mini-Society began, the students participated eagerly and sustained high levels of interest throughout the several weeks of the program.

In this school, Mini-Society is implemented by three fifth-grade teachers who work as a team and combine their classes into a single large society involving about 80 students. Businesses are set up and operated in a large utility room, thus avoiding the crowding and storage and other complications that would arise if these activities were carried on in regular classrooms.

In previous years, the teachers had devoted 18 weeks to Mini-Society, but this year an unusually large number of new and competing demands had to be accommodated, and the teachers found that they could allocate only 7 weeks to Mini-Society. Although this is less than the recommended minimum, they went ahead with the program anyway because they are convinced that the experience is valuable for students and that a truncated version would be better than none at all. Consequently, they instituted shortcuts such as relying somewhat more on didactic instruction and "leading" questions and relatively less on guided discovery (compared to what Kourilsky recommends) in order to pilot the students quickly through the early stages in which the society is established and money

is put into circulation, leading the students briskly through policy discussions and voting through show of hands (rather than allowing for more lengthy discussion with time for students to talk among themselves in between meetings and eventually vote using paper ballots), and allocating less school time for students to work on constructing their business storefronts and developing their advertising (students were told that since time was short, they would need to do more of this at home).

Despite these less-than-ideal conditions, a Mini-Society was formed quickly that included a name, a flag, and a currency system (available in denominations of "cool bucks," or CBs for short). For two weeks, students could earn CBs by getting to school on time, avoiding misconduct, and getting an "A" on at least one assignment. With teacher guidance, students had voted to adopt these mechanisms in preference to alternatives that were viewed as less fair because they would give certain individuals significant advantages over others. The third mechanism still favored high achievers over low achievers, but much less so than the originally suggested version which would have required earning an "A" on <u>all</u> assignments for the week as a condition of payment.

After two weeks of earning CBs in this manner but also being required to pay out CBs in order to purchase materials for their businesses, pay taxes, and pay rent and other business costs, the students had two weeks in which to act as business entrepreneurs and economic consumers. In all there were five sessions in which goods or services could be bought and sold--three restricted to the students themselves and various school staff who dropped in to participate, one in which the parents came to spend, and one in which the grandparents came to spend. The parents and grandparents had CBs to spend either because they sold their child raw materials for the business or because the child gave them some of the CBs that he or she had earned (either through the mechanisms available in

the previous two weeks or through business activity itself). The room buzzed with excitement during these "business hours," and a bonus to the Mini-Society program as it was implemented in this school was that it provided an opportunity to bring in parents and grandparents under very positive circumstances.

All of the students were involved in a business, usually in partnership with one or more friends. Most of the businesses sold goods, especially snacks, school supplies, or items currently popular in the child culture (Ninja Turtle materials, trading cards, pictures and posters of popular entertainers). Several businesses combined these and other items, billing themselves as "general" or "discount" stores. There were also several recreational businesses offering miniature golf, miniature basketball shooting, or video games as well as a "hair stuff" store ("Sorry guys, just for gals, unless it's your girlfriend"). The only true service business was a massage operation built into one of the general stores ("Back Rubs, 5 CBs; Neck Rubs, 2 CBs; The Works, 7 CBs").

Although the students clearly enjoyed this Mini-Society, it is difficult to tell how much conceptually based knowledge they carried away from it (no formal evaluation was done). Concepts such as scarcity, inflation, and price changes in response to changes in supply and demand were introduced in the process of setting up the Mini-Society. Debriefings focused attention on such topics as fairness; democratic decision making; taxes (including determination of penalties for late payment); the value of advertising (also the costs--students had to rent wall space for posters from the principal, and one of the teachers mentioned to the students that "Word had it" that the principal had offered a bounty of one CB to the school's maintenance man for each unauthorized advertisement that he found posted), gimmicks and special bargains as ways to lure customers (one free back rub to every seventh customer). Debriefing also revealed that stores offering items that suffer from low demand or direct

competition will probably have to lower their prices; stores that have cornered a market on high-demand items can raise their prices; it helps to take the initiative and approach potential customers directly or to give away free samples; and it helps to display one's wares on top of the counter rather than just keep them underneath it.

It seems likely that many students learned at least the gist of these principles but unlikely that very many could discuss them in generalizable terms using formal economics concepts. Because no one began a banking business (even though some students recognized a need for one because they had printed too many large denomination bills and not enough smaller ones, so that making change was a constant problem), students did not experience personal or business banking transactions and their associated record keeping. Also, because business operations lasted only two weeks, there was not enough time for certain experiences to develop (e.g., recognition by many students that the market for their product had been exhausted, thus providing motivation for them to develop a new business around another product or perhaps a service that would enjoy more sustained demand). Even a considerably longer time period would not guarantee a continually thriving Mini-Society economy, however: One of the teachers noted that last year the economy gradually petered out because students became satiated with the goods and services being offered, but none (or at least not enough) of them came up with ideas for new businesses that offered something for which there was a sustained demand. Thus, the latter sort of creativity will be needed if the economy of a Mini-Society is to sustain itself over significant time periods.

The Mini-Society is brought to a close by auctioning off all remaining unsold stock. Typically everything goes, because students realize that this is their last change to exchange Mini-Society money for valued goods or services

(although one teacher noted that many students enjoy keeping at least some of the Mini-Society money as a memento of the experience).

Even taking into account that it was a truncated version, my observations of this implementation of Mini-Society reinforced the impressions I had developed from studying the manual. I see it as an ambitious program that offers a great deal of excitement and enjoyment to students and provides them with a variety of experiences that can become valuable grist for debriefing discussions that will enable them to understand these experiences in terms of economics concepts and principles. The degree to which such understanding will be developed, however, will be determined heavily by the teacher's ability to recognize and exploit teachable moments, which in turn will be determined heavily by the teacher's knowledge of key economics concepts and principles.

Any curriculum becomes what the teacher makes it when enacting it in the classroom. Given the poor economics preparation of most elementary teachers and the spotty guidance in the Mini-Society manual concerning the debriefing component of the program, and given considerable developmental differences observed within the target 7-12 age range, one can expect to find broad variability in the degree to which Mini-Society implementations approach the ideals implied in the manual.

Other Economics Programs

Two other economics programs worth noting are Small-Size Economics (Skeel, 1988) and Children in the Marketplace (Joint Council on Economic Education, 1986). These are less ambitious, more conventional programs than Mini-Society, although they are designed to teach many of the same concepts.

Small-Size Economics

Small-Size Economics is a social studies curriculum supplement for grades K-3 designed to teach basic economics concepts through 20 lessons and 13 accompanying worksheets. The first 10 lessons, designed for kindergarten and first grade, teach the concepts of needs and wants, scarcity, goods and services, producers and consumers, resources, and division of labor. The content and related activities address these concepts within the contexts emphasized in the kindergarten and first-grade social studies curriculum: self, family, and school. Lessons 11-20 are designed for use in second and third grade. They review the concepts taught earlier and also teach the concepts of competition, economic decision making, production and distribution of products, interdependence, barter, money, and profit. These concepts are addressed within the contexts of neighborhood and community which are stressed in the second- and third-grade texts in contemporary elementary social studies series. Thus, although Small-Size Economics is a curriculum supplement, it can be integrated within the typical K-3 social studies program rather easily.

Small-Size Economics presents two or three lessons per concept, depending on concept complexity. Lessons follow a standard format that includes naming the concept to be emphasized, identifying the teaching strategy to be followed (inquiry, discussion, discovery, role play), identifying the context in which the content will be addressed (self, family, school, neighborhood, community), describing the instructional outcomes that constitute the objectives for the lesson, describing the teaching procedure, and suggesting a method for evaluating student learning. Reproducible activity worksheets that may be used for follow-up or evaluation purposes are provided for some of the lessons. The manual notes that lessons may be adapted for use with children of different

ages, depending on their experiences and capabilities, but does not give specific guidance for doing so.

The overall goal of the lessons is described as enhancing students' ability to make wise economic decisions. However, only one of the lessons and just a few of the worksheets engage students in (simulated) economic decision making. Most of the lessons and activities develop understanding of the basic concepts but do not call for students to apply these concepts in economic decision-making contexts. Thus, they call for students to list or classify examples of goods and services, to recognize that lowering price will increase demand, and so on. The concepts, examples, and activities appear well chosen, however, so that primary grade students should find the lessons interesting and the concepts comprehensible. Some lessons and activities call for using props (examples of products, paper and construction supplies) and some of the activities call for engagement in various simulations or field trips into the surrounding community. These curriculum elements appear to be feasible and cost effective, however, because the supplies are cheap and easily obtainable and the simulations and field trips are brief and do not require elaborate preparation.

Small-Size Economics should be a valuable supplement to the economics content found in the K-3 materials supplied by major publishers of elementary social studies series. It contains a few elements that students might find confusing (e.g., fuzziness in distinguishing between needs and wants), and it could use some additional activities calling for students to engage in economics decision making. On the whole, however, it will provide students with a much more complete and coherent introduction to economics than their elementary social studies textbook series will provide.

Children in the Marketplace

Children in the Marketplace is a series of eight lessons (with accompanying hand-outs and activities materials) designed to teach basic economics principles to third and fourth graders. The lessons teach that (1) people live in a world of relative scarcity, so that everyone must make choices; (2) people use resources to produce what other people want, and producers continually make choices regarding the combination of resources they will use to make goods and provide services; (3) people always want more, so that a market system functions to distribute most of the resources that satisfy people's wants; (4) people's wants stimulate production, so that consumers who are willing and able to buy products can influence output in a market economy; (5) the forces of supply and demand set the prices at which exchanges take place, so that people benefit from trade; (6) in an economy based on market prices, people are free to substitute one item for another, so that consumers often have a wide range of alternatives, or substitutes, from which to choose; (7) people must decide how to allocate income, and they can choose to forgo present consumption in order to be able to consume more in the future; and (8) the behavior of Americans as both consumers and producers determines what takes place in the U.S. market economy. These basic principles subsume 37 basic concepts (advertise, consumer, demand, opportunity cost, etc.) that are listed in a glossary that includes both formal definitions meant for teachers and simplified definitions meant for students.

The lessons are described as "classroom-tested." No specifics or data are provided to elaborate on this claim, but the lessons do seem feasible and appropriate for use with third and fourth graders. Each lesson includes an introduction that summarizes and elaborates on the key principles and implications to be taught, an estimated time allocation, a list of key concepts, a list

of goals phrased as key understandings that students are to achieve, a general description of the activity and any needed materials, a step-by-step description of what to do with the students to develop the lesson and activity, and instructions for review. Reproducible masters for handouts or lists of supplies needed for activities are also included.

The manual states that examples and activities have been selected with awareness that third and fourth graders are concrete operational learners. Consequently, the focus is on concrete examples, data that are directly evident, problems that are based on particular situations in the immediate environment, and events that are only moderately novel to students and thus relatable to what they already know or have experienced. Each lesson is designed to provide opportunities for students to first hear about economics concepts and principles, then apply and experience them, then review them, and then generalize their applications to concrete situations.

The content, questions, and activities appear to be well chosen--feasible for classroom use, appropriate for developing and applying the concepts and principles taught, and likely to be interesting and understandable to students. The lessons are particularly strong in providing for reflective closure through review and discussion questions and activity suggestions designed to help students to generalize their learning.

Children in the Marketplace could be used effectively in conjunction with Small-Size Economics to create an economics component to the K-4 social studies curriculum that would be much more complete, coherent, and likely to be accessed and used for life applications than the sporadic economics elements in typical elementary social studies series. Children in the Marketplace is especially useful because it emphasizes economics principles and decisions, not just basic concepts.

It should be noted that Children in the Marketplace adopts a not merely uncritical but virtually reverential attitude toward the U.S. market economy, stressing its benefits in several explicit ways but never even suggesting that it might also embody costs. In effect, it is the National Association of Manufacturer's version of economics, in which profit is an incentive for business enterprise, advertising is a service to consumers, and so on. Many teachers may find this appropriate, given that the lessons focus on microeconomics and are intended for elementary students. Other teachers may want to leaven the material with a more critical perspective, however. In any case, the lessons and activities offered in Children in the Marketplace should be effective for teaching economics principles for understanding, appreciation, and application to life outside of school.

Government and Law

Three sets of supplementary materials dealing with government and law are described below. Like the Small-Size Economics and Children in the Marketplace economics materials, these are relatively conventional lesson supplements.

Everyday Law for Young Citizens

Everyday Law for Young Citizens (Lipson & Lipson, 1988) is a law-education curriculum supplement for Grades 5-9 that is self-contained in a manual of approximately 160 pages. There are 17 pages of material for the teacher at the front, followed by 142 pages of content, questions, and activities built around 22 legal cases. The case material is printed in large print, avoids unnecessary legal jargon, is written at an elementary reading level, and is illustrated with humorous cartoons. The material is fictional and built around characters with humorous names (often children or adolescents) but built on actual legal cases.

Each of the 22 cases begins with a presentation of the basic facts of the case. Then comes a "What's your opinion?" section in which questions about the case are posed and then answered according to law. Next comes a "What if?" section in which variations on the case are explored through additional opinion questions followed by more law-based answers. Finally, the case closes with a page of suggested activities. All of this is written directly to the student. Teachers could copy just the case material and then use the questions and activities or they could order a copy of the book for every student. The activities call for a range of discussion, role play, debate, and so forth. The cases are well chosen to focus on both criminal and civil problems that children and adolescents can understand and relate to. Students working through this curriculum would learn a great deal about law and also have many opportunities to think critically and communicate arguments about issues of fairness, rights, responsibilities, and so forth. Although usable with elementary students, the material does not correlate in any way with the content in fifth or sixth grade.

I find the material and questions and activities attractive, both because students should find them interesting and informative and because they call for discussion of the fairness or appropriateness of the laws in addition to teaching what the laws say. There is also a good balance between rights and responsibilities, instead of just a focus on the latter. Thus, a knowledgeable teacher could make very good use of this material, although it is not clear at what grade level or how it would be fit into the existing curriculum.

The manual provides very little help to the teacher who is not already knowledgeable, however. The back cover of the book describes the material as follows:

> A practical, down-to-earth approach to the law for children and adults. It includes 22 lively cases and 95 related activities built around topics of timely interest and concern to young people. Each

> chapter features a four-part lesson plan that helps structure discussion, writing, and role playing. Each case invites student opinion, gives instruction in what the law says and changes the facts of the case for a variation on the theme. Written and illustrated with humor and clarity, the book offers a general guide to legal principles and concepts while improving students' analytical and problem-solving skills. It contains a comprehensive glossary of legal terms and instructions for a mock jury trial. The relevant, easy-to-use classroom resource. For grades 5-9+.

Unfortunately, the material in the first 17 pages meant for the teacher does very little to expand on this hype. There are suggestions for an opening discussion designed to raise students' awareness of why we have laws and what they do, as well as an activity designed to help them become aware of laws and the evidence of laws all around them. There is also a brief primer on basic principles of law, comparison of civil and criminal law, lawmaking, law enforcement, and the Constitution. However, the material then goes directly into the cases. Nothing at all is said to the teacher about how much time to spend on the material, whether to teach it as a single extended unit or spread it out over one or more school years, how to adapt it to different grade levels, or anything else. The case material occasionally contains additional information for the teacher, but this is information about the laws that apply to the issues raised in the case, rather than information about how to teach the lesson. There is not even any guidance about whether the teacher is expected to select a subset of them to focus on. Thus, although the materials are very attractive and potentially valuable, the manual offers no teacher guidance.

Democracy for Young Americans

Democracy for Young Americans (Aten, 1989) is an activities book that includes 62 activities in slightly more than 100 pages. Most of the activities provide some information and then ask the student to write out answers to one or more questions. Some call for the students to conduct research using textbooks or encyclopedias, and a few call for them to engage in other activities such as

collecting survey data. The activities include historical notions about democracy; comparisons among the major forms of government; the three main branches of the U.S. federal government and their workings; key features of the American legal system; and case studies focused on currently debated legal issues, state and local government, and American citizenship.

The back cover describes the materials as follows:

> Students explore the historical background, the values and the implications of the democratic system. Issues, terms and democratic principles are analyzed and evaluated as your students examine the rewards of democracy as well as its shortcomings. The local, state and national governments are all presented, giving your students the full process of American democracy. Hypothetical simulations will help children learn to better appreciate living in a democracy without imposing values on them. An excellent resource and activity book that provides you with hands-on learning! Answer key included. For Grades 4-8+.

Inside, a "To the Teacher" page cautions teachers against attempting to present only the positive aspects of the American political system and urges them to elicit their students' ideas and encourage their active learning as they work through the materials. Other than this, there is no guidance of any kind for teachers, who presumably will reproduce and distribute whatever worksheets in this collection they believe are useful.

The reading level and especially the cognitive sophistication and background knowledge assumed by many of the questions in this activity book would limit its use with elementary students, despite the claims made on the cover. However, many of the activities could be useful at the junior high level, especially for courses or units in law, government, or civics. The content focuses mostly on understanding concepts and principles rather than just learning facts, and many of the questions call for critical thinking and decision making.

The material does deal with negative as well as positive aspects of American democracy, including both the general inefficiencies built into our political processes and specific miscarriages of justice such as the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II. Rather than taking a neutral stance and genuinely questioning the system, however, the materials consistently project the message that our system is the best one despite its flaws. The front cover describes the materials as "activities to enhance a greater appreciation of the American system," and this seems an apt summary of their intended (and probable) outcomes.

Because of the range of activities included in this collection and the time that it would take to complete them, no teacher is likely to use the entire collection in a single course or during a single school year. However, teachers teaching the appropriate courses might well want to use many of these activities as group activities or individual assignments, and they might also want to borrow some of the questions embedded in other activities as foci for group discussion or debate. Teachers looking for case studies or other raw material to serve as a basis for critical thinking, decision making, and related life applications of civics content will find this activity book particularly useful.

Our Living Constitution: Then and Now

Our Living Constitution: Then and Now (Aten, 1987) is a similar activities book, described as being for Grades 5-8+. It takes students through the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, proceeding in sections and using a two-column layout in which exact quotations from the original documents appear in the left column and paraphrased versions rewritten to be more understandable to students appear in the right column. The material is preceded by

background explanation and followed by comprehension questions and various exercises. In addition to the documents themselves, the materials include supplementary sections and exercises built around explanations of how the federal government currently functions, examples of legal cases dealing with current issues, accounts of historical incidents in which various aspects of the Constitution were implemented, and so on.

These materials would be very useful as the basis for a course or an extended unit on the Constitution and the American federal system of government. The author has done a nice job of paraphrasing the Declaration and the Constitution into language that will make these documents much more accessible to students, and the questions call for a great deal of critical thinking and decision making in addition to demonstrating basic comprehension.

Unfortunately, no guidance is provided to the teacher about how the materials might be used in various grade levels. My impression is that the materials would be most useful in Grades 7-10. Even though vocabulary demands have been minimized, the nature of the content addressed is often so abstract, technical, or otherwise complex as to limit its appropriateness for use with elementary students.

History

The history materials are more varied in nature and scope than the government and law materials. They include a handbook for developing one's own family history, a series of guidebooks for teachers, and an activities supplement.

A Family History Handbook

A Family History Handbook (Rife, 1985) is a 113-page textbook/workbook that provides students with information about families and family histories and

guides them in developing their own family histories. It comes with a teacher's manual and a large family history pedigree chart covering seven generations. The teacher's manual expands a bit on some of the material and provides answers to questions raised in the text, but it says nothing about the grade levels that the materials are intended for or about how they have been or might be used in the classroom.

The text begins by describing different types of families and terms used to discuss family relationships and engages students in recording information about themselves and their families. Then comes a series of lessons, examples, and exercises relating to different sources of information that may be mined by students in developing family histories: Bibles and other family records, church records, diaries and journals, cemeteries, census records, photographs, immigration records, interviewing of relatives, wills, family coats of arms, vital statistics records, newspapers, and military service records. In addition to focusing directly on the nature of these sources of information and ways that students might tap them to develop their own family histories, these sections also teach more general concepts and information about each of the topics addressed and seek to develop students' skill in understanding and interpreting the information that might be found in these sources. Thus, questions and exercises call students' attention to some of the details of photographs from earlier times; question them about the information embedded in sections of a diary written in 1870; and invite them to take a minicensus in their own neighborhoods using a simplified census form, to interview relatives, and to interpret and write wills.

The material is interestingly written and illustrated, and the forms and exercises should be useful for developing students' understanding and helping them to develop a family history. The material appears to have been written

with junior high students in mind, but most of it would be understandable to and usable by fifth graders. Few teachers would want to invest the time needed to work through the entire program, but teachers interested in having their students develop their own family histories as part of a history course will find much useful information and many useful handouts in these materials.

The materials could be used in either a short version confined to a single curriculum unit or a more complete version spread out across the school year. In the short version, students would confine their purview to information that could be developed from sources available in the home and from interviewing relatives. In the more complete version, students might also write for census records, military records, and other sources of information that would allow them to trace their families back as far as they could, using information acquired from external sources in addition to information available in the home. Since it would take several months to accumulate such information, it would be necessary for the teacher to schedule an initial family history assignment early in the year and then revisit it later toward the end of the year.

The materials would be of some use even to teachers who did not want to get into a family history assignment but who did want to teach their students something about interpreting historical documents. The materials include a variety of reproducible documents (a funeral program; a diary; a will; an obituary; military service records; pension records; and sample, birth, death, and marriage certificates and census forms), usually accompanied by questions or exercises.

Guidebooks for Teaching U.S. History

U.S. History, Book One: Beginnings to 1865 (McBee, Tate, & Wagner, 1985) is a 225-page guidebook designed to help teachers teach the "conceptual history"

of the United States. It is one of four guidebooks designed for that purpose, and it is designed to be used in conjunction with whatever textbook the teacher is using. It says that it can be used in teaching "any" American history course, but the level of the content and the demandingness for student abilities and independent work are such that it would be restricted to high school courses, and perhaps even honors courses.

It is predicated on some interesting assumptions and contains some important goals and objectives. Key assumptions are that our country reveals cooperation, coexistence, and occasional conflict among three visions of America: a nation founded on belief in the rights of the individual; a pluralistic society in which various groups coexist; and a nation that reveals a sense of homeland, patriotism, or being American. Students are to learn about these themes as well as come to understand that we are evolutionary products of the past, live in the present, and shape the future. History is seen as an evolutionary process composed of recurring themes, so the curriculum emphasizes examining how and why changes occur and how these themes have shaped the current world. Pages 4 and 5 list key concepts, classroom activities, themes, and skills.

The material is simply too advanced for elementary school, but study of some of the key concepts and themes for each historical period might be useful in developing questions for interviewing students in fifth-grade American history courses.

Creative Activities for Teaching U.S. History

Creative Activities for Teaching U.S. History (1988) is a series of packets of reproducible black-line masters containing problem-solving and critical-thinking activities for use in U.S. history courses. I examined the "Westward

Movement" packet, which contained 20 puzzles, games, and activities focusing on life and times in the American West in the 19th century.

Some of these activities focus on relatively minor details (constructing a covered wagon from a milk carton; guessing the names and functions of personal, household, and horse/wagon items illustrated through drawings; interpreting cattle brands; and guessing the meanings of colorful but obsolete terms used by cowboys and miners in the old West). Other activities, however, allow for more substantive critical thinking or decision making. For example, one activity calls for students to make a series of seven decisions that had to be made by the Donner Party (a snowbound group whose survivors eventually resorted to cannibalism). After students discuss and make the decisions, they get the opportunity to find out what decision the Donner Party made and what the results of this decision were.

Other activities provide students with basic information about key issues or events in the development of the West and call for them to take the roles of the original decision makers (as the state governor, decide whether or not to call out the militia to put down the vigilantes; as a Mexican miner, decide how to respond to newly passed laws designed to drive you out of California; as a citizen of Owens Valley, choose among strategies for trying to stop construction of the aqueduct that would divert water to Los Angeles). There is also an interesting vignette script and associated decision-making exercise involving a railroad developer who has to decide whether or not to go along with potential investors who will invest only if they are promised kickbacks and other forms of special treatment. Finally, there is a simulation exercise calling for a team representing the U.S. government to negotiate with a team representing the Nez Perce Indians concerning land claims and ways of life.

Teachers of American history, including fifth-grade teachers, might well wish to use several of these decision-making activities in their "westward movement" units, as well as comparable activities from other packets dealing with other historical periods. These activities will be most effective, however, if they are structured and scaffolded optimally by the teacher and if they are followed up by appropriate postactivity debriefing discussions. Unfortunately, the materials provide no guidance to teachers about these aspects of implementing the activities in the classroom.

Critical Thinking, Reasoning, and Decision Making

In addition to the previously described supplementary materials that focus on particular school subjects and their underlying disciplines, there are supplementary materials designed to assist teachers in engaging their students in critical thinking, reasoning, and decision making about a broad range of social education content and issues. Three of the best of these are critiqued below.

Citizenship Decision-Making

Citizenship Decision-Making (LaRaus & Remy, 1978) is a set of supplementary lessons on basic decision-making skills intended for use in Grades 4-9. It is a thoughtfully developed and packaged program that is self-contained in a single 242-page manual. The pages have been perforated for easy removal and punched to accommodate storage in a three-ring binder. The latter features are important because many of the pages are black-line masters of material to be copied and distributed to students for use during activities.

The curriculum is meant as a supplement to regular social studies courses, so its content is not correlated with the social studies content taught in any particular grade level. It consists of 25 lessons designed to fit one or more 30- to 40-minute class periods. The authors note that the curriculum would

require about 11 weeks if taught in sequence as a single continuous social studies module, but they also suggest that the four units could be spread across the school year or even taught during separate years. Unit I (Decisions and You) introduces students to basic decision-making concepts and skills and develops their awareness of decision making in their environments (10 lessons). Unit II (Making Decisions) develops decision-making skills by providing students with experience in making decisions (6 lessons). Unit III (Judging Decisions) develops students' skills for assessing the appropriateness of decisions and increasing their awareness of how decisions affect them personally (5 lessons). Unit IV (Influencing Decisions) builds students' skills for influencing decision makers (4 lessons).

Certain lessons could be skipped because they are confined to review or focused on various specialized applications (e.g., simulated courtroom trials or decisions by government officials). Also, optional extension activities are suggested for each lesson and examples of reading and literature correlations are given for each unit. Thus, the curriculum is quite flexible, and teachers can either contract it or expand it to fit their goals and time frames.

The lessons typically consist of 2-4 pages of instructions followed by several pages of black line masters. The instructions typically provide a good deal of useful information and suggestions to teachers, including ideas about how the recommended procedures might be simplified or scaffolded where necessary. The instructions for each lesson follow a standard format that includes the following elements.

Duration. The approximate time needed to complete this lesson (one, two, or three class periods).

Purpose. A statement of the overall goal of the lesson (corresponding to the unit goal).

Objective. A statement of the particular competencies that students will acquire through the lesson.

Materials. A statement of needed materials (typically just copies of the black-line masters supplied in the manual, but sometimes additional materials such as construction paper or equipment such as the overhead projector).

Background information. Several paragraphs that the authors describe as "a minicourse for the teacher" on the topic of the lesson. Included here is elaboration on the theoretical background for the material taught in each lesson, as well as on the intended functions of the lesson and how it fits within the larger curriculum.

Vocabulary. A listing of new key words to be emphasized with the students (typically just two or three).

Strategies. Step-by-step instructions for opening, developing, and concluding the lesson. Lessons typically include 5-10 steps.

Instructional options. Optional suggestions for expanding the lesson with plays, art, poetry, map exercises, and other activities. These also include value awareness exercises and suggestions for visits to town councils and courtrooms or other inquiry into local political decision making.

The instructions to the teacher are helpfully detailed without being unnecessarily rigid or formally scripted. For the most part, I found them clear, easy to follow, and helpful in keeping teachers informed about where each lesson fits within the bigger picture, calling attention to key ideas, anticipating potential problems, and suggesting ways to tailor lessons to different age groups. Although no formal evaluation data are given in the manual, the authors note that the development process included field testing with a wide range of students, and insights gained from this process are reflected in the manual.

Instructional design. The authors identify several principles of instructional design that guided development of the curriculum. First, the lessons represent an experience-based approach to instruction. They involve students in making, judging, and influencing decisions concerning personally meaningful content that they have experienced in daily life. The second principle is active learning. Students learn by doing as well as by reading and discussion. Lessons call for them to perform the tasks of decision making they are learning

about and then to reflect on their experience afterwards. The third principle is appropriate practice. Most skills practice is embedded within various decision-making activities, so that students learn basic skills and processes through pattern recognition and cumulative reinforcement. This relates to the fourth principle, which is transfer of learning. By focusing instruction on decision-making tasks that students confront daily, the lessons maximize the likelihood of positive transfer to their lives outside of school.

The fifth principle is cultural pluralism and diversity. This is probably mistitled, because, instead of attempting to build a great range of cultural examples into the materials, the authors have chosen (appropriately, in my opinion) to focus on generally universal experiences and thus make the curriculum meaningful as common preparation for all students regardless of sex, race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. The sixth principle concerns values. Values are handled by engaging in exercises built around Lasswell's eight social values: affection, enlightenment, power, honesty, respect, skill, wealth, and well-being. Also, these values are used as the basis for the decision-judging activities featured in Unit III. Students are not taught values as such; instead, they are taught to analyze decisions by identifying the values and associated goals that will be served or not served if the decisions are implemented.

The seventh principle concerns critical thinking skills. Lessons are designed to give students opportunities to apply study skills and critical thinking skills to decision-making problems. The final principle concerns evaluation. Lessons are designed to promote constructive assessment of student learning by phrasing objectives in terms of student competencies to be acquired and then calling for learning activities and evaluation tasks that are designed to allow students to develop and display these competencies.

Content and activities. The authors use "skills" language and have developed the curriculum around their conception of decision-making skills, but they have included a great deal of propositional knowledge in addition to procedural knowledge about citizenship decision making. They define a decision as a choice from among two or more alternatives, and political decisions as decisions about the management of groups that involve making rules, setting goals, or distributing resources. The groups include families, peer groups, and school classes in addition to towns, states, and nations. Lessons address not only the process of making decisions, but the process of making judgments about decisions and the process of attempting to influence the decisions of others.

Early lessons in Unit I focus on these basic definitions and help students to appreciate that decisions about rules, goals, or resources (i.e., political decisions) that affect them are being made all the time, both in their own families and social groups and in society at large. For example, families have rules about bedtimes and places that children may or may not go on their own; friends have rules about the games they play or the social behavior they expect; schools have rules about clothing and behavior in the halls; and communities have criminal laws, traffic regulations, and inspection codes. Students learn to appreciate that these rules are all decisions that have been made from among a larger set of alternatives (albeit sometimes by default). In the process, they engage in exercises, discussions, and simulation activities (e.g., deciding whether or not a new peer should be allowed to join an ongoing ball game, acting as a state legislator voting on budget priorities).

Students learn to see evidence of political decision making all around them (street signs, library, government workers, fire hydrant, building permits, etc.). They also learn that political decisions are often made necessary by scarcity of resources or by conflict among groups with competing goals.

Finally, at the end of Unit I they learn to "climb a decision tree" (graphically illustrate potential decision alternatives as separate branches that might be taken when climbing a tree; record the positive and negative consequences that each alternative entails; note the values that will or will not be promoted as a result of these consequences; and then synthesize this information to determine which alternative will yield the most desirable set of outcomes given the values that one wishes to emphasize). Again, students apply these ideas through various exercises, discussions, and simulations (e.g., deciding among alternative responses to being picked on at school by a bully, taking the role of a Native American spying on Vikings who have landed in 1,000 A.D. and deciding whether to welcome and trade with them or to attempt to drive them away).

Unit II begins with a review lesson, then a lesson that elaborates the concept of a decision-making occasion as an occasion that requires a choice among alternatives when the basis for decision making is not obvious. Students learn that a rational process for making decisions in these situations is to clarify the goals and associated values (from among the eight social values listed by Lasswell) that one wishes to promote, identifying potential alternatives and predicting their probable positive and negative consequences, then evaluating the consequences with respect to one's values and deciding accordingly. Included here is a simulation activity involving an incident in a playground that is designed to be analogous to the 1968 Pueblo incident (a group of friends goes to play ball but "some tough big kids" grab the ball, start playing with it themselves, and won't give it back). A suggested optional activity is another simulation in which students would act as decision makers for a "large, strong country" that has had one of its ships and crew captured by a smaller country that claimed it was spying. In each simulation, students are to proceed by generating alternatives, considering the potential advantages and

costs of each with respect to the values that they place highest priorities on, and then finding the alternative that offers the most favorable set of trade-offs. Here and throughout the curriculum, the emphasis in exercises, discussions, and simulations is not on arriving at any particular "right answer," but instead on learning to apply the decision-making model (in ways that are consistent with one's value priorities).

Subsequent lessons in Unit II teach that there are three basic ways for group decisions to be made--by authority, by consensus, or by voting--and that each involves advantages and disadvantages. Simulations here include debate and voting on issues such as whether the schools should be kept open year round as a community resource, whether parents should have to pay for property that their children damage, and whether the nation should ban discrimination against all people. Voting would be done under realistic conditions that include verification of registration, issuance of official voting slips, voting in booths that ensure privacy, placement of votes into an official ballot box, and supervised tabulation of results. Subsequent activities call for students to make decisions by acting in the roles of various governmental decision makers (director of public service, county engineer, director of public works, director of public welfare). Again, the decision tree process is used to clarify alternatives, consequences, and value-related outcomes.

Having learned a systematic decision-making process in Unit II, students learn to judge decisions in Unit III. Lesson 1 includes exercises designed to help them appreciate the fact that not only family and school decisions but city, state, and national decisions affect each of them personally, for good or ill. They consider various decisions that have been or might be made at each level and ask what the consequences of the decision are for various groups; whether the decision concerns a goal, resource, or rule that affects them; how

they feel about the decision; and whether or not they consider it fair and appropriate.

In Lesson 2, the students learn to assess various policies and decisions from the points of view of different groups (e.g., gun control policies analyzed from the viewpoint of police officers, firearms manufacturers, delivery truck drivers, hunters, store owners, and sociologists). In Lesson 3, students re-create a courtroom trial based on an actual Supreme Court case concerning students who were suspended from school for wearing arm bands to protest American involvement in Vietnam). In addition to trying the case, the students analyze the effects of the decision on students, teachers, and school administrators. Working from role cards, various students enact the roles of bailiff, clerk, judge, jury, prosecuting attorney, defense attorney, and witnesses on both sides (principals, parents, students).

The remaining lessons in Unit III provide additional practice in judging decisions according to the four criteria mentioned above. The students are provided with facts and opinions related to several decisions (a teacher cancels recess for an entire class because of an action by an individual student when the teacher's back was turned, a town decides to issue nonlethal weapons to its police, a school board decides to switch to a year-round school calendar, a government decides to pass a law protecting hawks, etc.). There is also a simulation activity in which students act as a town council debating whether or not to attempt to attract foreign-owned industry to the town.

Unit IV introduces the students to five methods of influencing decisions (exercising authority, using power, offering rewards, offering affection, or providing information that will persuade the decision maker). After hearing about examples of how these various forms of influence might be used and discussing their probable positive and negative consequences, students use the

decision tree tool to role play and evaluate the relative effectiveness of influence strategies that might be adopted by two students depicted in a scenario involving teacher punishment for something that they didn't do.

Later instruction and activities focus on how students might be able to use information to affect decision making--both by making persuasive cases to the decision makers directly and by analyzing to see how the decision would affect various groups and rallying support for one's position from those who share a common interest in it. Unit IV then closes with a lesson reviewing the curriculum as a whole. A brief test of recall of information is also included, although the manual emphasizes that the various learning and application activities included throughout the curriculum provide observable criteria for evaluation of not only learning but transfer.

Analysis and evaluation. I am favorably impressed with most aspects of Citizenship Decision-Making. The manual is particularly impressive, being unusually clear in presenting the goals and rationale for the program, providing background information in addition to instructions for the activities, offering options, and suggesting ways in which the lessons could be adapted to varying needs. I believe that most teachers would be able to implement the program effectively working from this manual, even if they had not had the opportunity to see the program in action.

The curriculum offers a rich and well integrated network of propositional knowledge about decision making, procedural knowledge of decision-making skills, and opportunities to apply these within authentic citizenship decision- making contexts. If anything, the curriculum probably encompasses too much content, given that it is a supplement that would have to be grafted on to the regular social studies scope and sequence. Teachers who were not willing to allot the time specified for the full program could pare it down to a reduced but still

coherent version by eliminating most of the review lessons and skills practice activities as well as lessons that focus on content not central to the decision-making model (e.g., lessons on scarcity and conflict as causes for decision making, the unit on influencing decisions). The basic decision-making model the curriculum is built around (generating alternatives, assessing probable positive and negative consequences, making the decision based on optimizing valued outcomes, using the decision tree tool) is familiar to and would be endorsed by most social educators. However, many of them would question the almost completely value-neutral stance taken throughout the curriculum,preferring instead an approach that identified certain values as basic (e.g., values such as justice, equality, responsibility, freedom, diversity, and privacy that underlie our nation's basic social contracts). In the latter approach, students would be taught to emphasize decision alternatives that are most consistent with these basic values, rather than to seek to optimize whatever values the students chose to emphasize (whether they were consistent with these basic values or not). Teachers who wish to adjust Citizenship Decision-Making in this way can do so easily.

Many of the activities (e.g., most of those mentioned previously) appear well designed to provide authentic opportunities for application of the knowledge and skills taught in the curriculum. I was particularly impressed with the discussions, simulation activities, and citizen-participation activities that provided students with realistic opportunities for decision making concerning their current social lives (in their families, in their peer groups, or at school) and in their lives as citizens both now (through current citizen-participation projects) and in the future (via simulation). However, a few activities seemed unnecessarily childish (activities built around fantasy characters with names such as Peter Potsenpans and Freddy Frankenstein), framed the

decision to be made or the list of alternatives in oversimplified or unrealistic ways, appeared to be more trouble than they were worth (e.g., a game called "Button Battle" designed to exemplify how scarcity creates occasions for decision making), offered nothing more than low-level vocabulary or skills practice (e.g., word searches), or involved examples that were too far-fetched or unrealistic to have much authentic application value (the Freddy Frankenstein case involved trying to decide what to do about Freddy who had eaten a magic mushroom and ballooned to such gigantic proportions that he was crushing furniture and scaring his classmates).

A few other problems with the curriculum are worth noting. One is that, like most other social studies curricula, it sometimes introduces definitions or distinctions that are not completely clear or consistent. Sometimes this is due to the inherently fuzzy nature of the concepts themselves and sometimes to the way that the concepts are handled in the text or the associated activities. Problems of this kind in Citizenship Decision-Making included a tendency to treat goals and values as synonyms rather than to distinguish clearly between them, fuzziness in distinguishing between and providing consistent examples of conflict and scarcity, and confusion between governmental functions typically handled at the local level versus the state level.

Those concerned about teaching basic values might object to the values and attitudes portrayed by certain of the fantasy characters that appear in the exercises or by the limited alternatives listed for certain decision occasions. Peter Potsenpans, for example, is portrayed as a slothful hedonist who cynically manipulates his mother and teacher whenever they attempt to make sure that he fulfills his responsibilities. He evades as many duties as possible and performs the rest only to the extent needed to avoid hassles. In another exercise entitled "Being Picked On," the listed decision alternatives are all relatively

low-level *or unrealistic* ones that do not include the kinds of alternatives that sensible parents would teach their children, and the discussion of the merits of various alternatives minimizes the potential resource role of adults and places far more emphasis on conforming to peer-group pressures than most parents (or psychologists concerned about development of a healthy sense of autonomy and efficacy, for that matter) would see as appropriate.

Conclusion. I believe that Citizenship Decision-Making has a great deal to offer for individual teachers or school social studies departments interested in adding more emphasis on decision making to their social education curricula. Although it is not correlated with the social studies content taught at any particular grade level, Citizenship Decision-Making is clearly a social education curriculum because it emphasizes decision making in social and civic contexts. Compared to some of the more generic decision making curriculum supplements, Citizenship Decision-Making is more closely linked to the social education curriculum in its content and more likely to provide authentic application opportunities in its activities.

Although the authors recommend it for Grades 4-9, it is probably best taught in Grades 6-8. Some of the content, especially that calling for analyzing projected decision alternatives with respect to the degree to which they promote each of Lasswell's eight social values or projecting the probable consequence of decisions on various categories of stakeholders, may be too abstract or otherwise confusing for younger students. Another consideration is course content: Citizenship Decision-Making would be difficult to integrate with the content of history courses, but relatively easy to integrate with the content of courses in geography, civics, or social problems.

As noted previously, teachers who feel that they cannot allocate much time to decision making as a curriculum supplement can create a reduced but still

coherent version focused around the most essential concepts and the decision-making model. At minimum, teachers could borrow selectively from the lesson content and activities offered in this curriculum as substitutes for the decision-making content in their regular social studies materials. I believe that even this relatively minimal use of Citizenship Decision-Making lessons and activities would improve the decision-making elements of most teachers' social studies curricula, because Citizenship Decision-Making is better rationalized, more coherent, and more likely to develop citizenship decision-making dispositions and skills that students will retain and use in their lives outside of school than typical social studies series are.

Reasoning with Democratic Values

Reasoning with Democratic Values: Ethical Problems in United States History (Lockwood & Harris, 1985) uses historical episodes as a basis for teaching students critical reasoning and value-based decision making. The materials consist of an instructor's manual and two volumes of episodes that students can read as a basis for discussing ethical problems. Volume I covers 1607 through 1876, and Volume II covers 1877 through the present. The instructor's manual contains about 30 pages describing the curriculum (rationale and goals, content and organization, questions and answers about the curriculum, guidelines for teaching the episodes, and guidelines for grading students and evaluating the success of the program), followed by "answers" for the activities in the other two volumes. The latter are the expected answers/major points to be developed in handling each question addressed to students.

This curriculum is intended as a supplement for secondary history courses. Teachers are advised to use two or three episodes per month, correlated with the content taught in their American history courses. Although the curriculum will

deepen knowledge of particular historical episodes, build discussion skills, and have other effects, its main goal is to promote social responsibility by engaging students in thoughtful reasoning about ethical aspects of historical events. It does not seek to indoctrinate students into a predetermined set of behaviors, although it does assume general agreement on a set of democratic values (authority, equality, liberty, life, loyalty, promise keeping, property, and truth). Using actual historical events as the basis, it confronts students with situations in which these basic values conflict and honest debate about what constitutes responsible action is required. Based loosely on principles developed by Kohlberg and others, it aims to advance the quality of students' ethical reasoning through discussion and related assignments.

Each episode calls for a four-section sequence of activities. (1) Historical understanding: Answer questions about the broader historical context from which the episode has been drawn. (2) Reviewing the facts of the case: Answer more specific questions about the episode. (3) Analyzing ethical issues: Distinguish factual from ethical issues, recognize the values embedded in the episode, explore the meanings of these values as applied to the episode, and identify conflicts among the values. (4) Expressing your reasoning: Make judgments, orally or in writing, about right and wrong in the episode.

The "questions and answers about the curriculum" section creates distance between this curriculum and the values clarification approach, which is rejected as treating value issues superficially, promoting ethical relativism, failing to respect the privacy rights of students and their parents, and having a weak theoretical and research base. This curriculum avoids ethical relativism and does not ask students to reveal personal information about themselves or their families. Furthermore, it is based on historical events and thus embodies a remoteness from the content that allows for "more dispassionate reflection about

right and wrong." Of six general types of value education (inculcation, moral development, analysis, evocation and union, clarification, and action learning), this approach combines analysis and moral development.

The manual gives relatively detailed, yet flexible, guidelines for teachers. The basic four-section sequence appears throughout the curriculum, but teachers are informed that they will need to make choices. Typically, either one or two class periods are spent teaching an episode, depending on how many of the provided questions the teacher wants to instruct the class to address, whether everything will be done in class or some as homework, whether students will be expected to write in addition to discussing, and so forth. Typical one-class and two-class lessons are shown.

A basic choice is whether to do both analyzing ethical issues and expressing your reasoning or only one of these activities. If the choice includes the expressing your reasoning activities, only some of the items should be selected because

> there would not be sufficient time to discuss all of them properly. For most episodes, an attempt to discuss all of the items from this activity would be futile. The result would be a superficial glance at complex ethical questions, which require careful reflection and extensive dialogue.

To help teachers make choices for the expressing your reasoning activities, the authors have ranked the items, beginning with the one that addresses the central ethical-value conflict represented by the episode.

Instructions are given for presenting the activities in various formats (large-group discussion, small-group discussion, using either agreement groups or disagreement groups), using written dialogue (in which pairs of students successively respond to each other's arguments), recorded dialogue (following a debate format), and historical acting (role playing).

Teachers are urged to teach students how to have good discussions of ethical issues and to make sure that they all participate actively (because those who merely watch and listen may mistakenly believe that their own positions are clear, when attempting to articulate them would reveal that they are not). Guidelines are given to help teachers focus discussion on ethical issues rather than move toward a particular right answer. Suggested model questions for probing students' ethical reasoning include raising competing values, examining ethical consistency, clarifying terms, seeking relevance, and taking roles. Discussions are to conclude with a summary of the key values and arguments addressed. This section offers positive and negative criteria for judging the effectiveness of discussions, and the section on grading and evaluation offers additional ideas about both grading the achievement of individual students and assessing the effectiveness of the program as a whole.

This would be a valuable curriculum supplement for American history courses taught within a citizen education social studies program, but both the reading level of the materials and the complexities of many of the issues addressed limit their application to the secondary grades. Elementary teachers could adapt aspects of some of the episodes for use in fifth grade, if they provided the necessary base of information to the students through explanation or handouts. The basic four-section plan and guidelines for discussions and activities should be just as useful in fifth grade as in higher grades.

Critical Thinking Handbooks

Richard Paul and his colleagues have published three handbooks designed as inservice professional development manuals for use by teachers interested in infusing more critical thinking into their lessons. I inspected the two handbooks meant for elementary teachers: Critical Thinking Handbook: A Guide

for Remodelling Lesson Plans in Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science (Paul, Binker, & Charbonneau, 1987) and Critical Thinking Handbook: 4th-6th Grades. A Guide for Remodelling Lesson Plans in Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science (Paul, Binker, Jensen, & Kreklau, 1987).

The handbooks do not contain materials meant for direct use by students. Nor do they contain systematic sequences of lesson plans meant to be taught as intact curricula. Instead, they offer an elaborated definition of the concept of critical thinking and a systematic model for first critiquing the lessons found in popularly used language arts, social studies, and science series and then remodeling them so as to emphasize the authors' concept of critical thinking and the principles and strategies associated with it.

The authors define critical thinking as thinking which evaluates reasons and brings thought and action into line with our evaluations or our best sense of what is true. It implies not only the application of critical reasoning skills but also the operation of attitudes and dispositions associated with fair-mindedness. Thus, the authors speak of developing "strong sense" critical thinkers who use their skills in the service of sincere, fair-minded understanding and evaluation of not only others' beliefs but also their own. This contrasts with "weak sense" critical thinkers who use their skills only to attack the positions of others and to pursue their own selfish interests. Thus, in addition to skills, there is considerable emphasis on the moral virtues of the critical person, such as intellectual humility, intellectual courage, faith in reason, and fair-mindedness.

To assist students in becoming critical thinkers, the authors define and suggest methods for teaching approximately 30 critical thinking strategies (slightly different lists appear in the different manuals). These are subdivided into affective strategies (exercising independent thinking, developing

insight into one's own egocentricity, exercising fair-mindedness), cognitive macroabilities (clarifying ideas, developing criteria for evaluation, evaluating source credibility), and cognitive microskills (distinguishing facts from ideals, examining assumptions, recognizing contradictions). These strategies are incorporated into remodeled lessons, in which the content is reorganized to focus on key ideas and students are given opportunities to engage in critical thinking through Socratic discussion or role playing and reconstructing opposing views.

Socratic discussion is structured through Socratic questioning, which is based on the idea that all thinking has a logic. The purpose of Socratic questioning is to expose the logic of someone's thought. Thus, questions are designed to raise basic issues, probe beneath the surface of things, pursue problematic areas, and help students to engage in critical dialogue on the issues. Supportive questions may seek clarification, probe assumptions, probe for reasons or evidence, ask about viewpoints or perspectives, probe implications and consequences of argued positions, or call for clarification of the issues or questions to be addressed. Role playing and reconstructing of opposing views can be accomplished both through some of these questions and through various role taking exercises.

The authors note that popularly used curriculum series seldom systematically employ these or any other strategies for helping students to learn and apply critical thinking skills and dispositions. Often the content of lessons does not lend itself to critical thinking, either because it is restricted to a parade of facts or because it is restricted to isolated skills practice. Even where the potential for critical thinking is present, the authors frequently find flaws such as calling for debate but with an emphasis on winning rather than on developing fair-minded understanding of the various positions, or simply

asking students to agree or disagree with conclusions rather than requiring them to show that they have understood the varying positions and rationally evaluated them in order to reach a reasoned judgment.

After elaborating on these and other issues and describing the underlying principles and suggested application guidelines for each of the teaching strategies, the manuals then present examples in the form of remodeled lessons in language arts, social studies, and science. There are 19 such remodeled lessons in the Grades K-3 manual and 15 in the Grades 4-6 manual. The remodeled lessons include a list of objectives of the remodeled plan, an abstract of the original lesson plan, a critique of the original lesson plan, and then the remodeled lesson plan itself. In addition, the complete original lesson plans are given in an appendix. The lessons sample from each of the grade levels covered in the respective manuals, as well as the different kinds of lessons taught (history, geography, citizen decision making in the future, etc.).

I found the critiques generally justified and the suggested remodeled lessons generally appropriate, although with some partial reservations. First, the remodeled lessons rely very heavily on questioning/guided discovery approaches, even for topics that might be unfamiliar to most students. A second, and related, reservation is that many of the lessons, especially in the K-3 handbook, appear too advanced for the designated grade level. Thus, for many of these lessons, I suspect that the teacher would have to either give the students more input through lecture and explanation than the authors suggest in their lesson plan or else confine the dialogue to those aspects that are most accessible to the students.

The lesson plans could also be criticized on the grounds that they are confined mostly to discussion. Many teachers would want to add a writing assignment calling for students to articulate and defend positions on the issues

discussed (or in some other way to synthesize and communicate their views in writing).

Despite these reservations, I believe that these handbooks are valuable resources for helping teachers to understand the concept of critical thinking, formulate critical thinking goals for their own curricula, and adjust existing lessons or invent new ones that will do a better job of infusing an emphasis on critical thinking into subject-matter teaching (in language arts and science as well as in social studies). Teachers who emphasize the citizen education aspects of social studies will be especially pleased with these handbooks, because they emphasize not just critical thinking skills but "strong sense" critical thinking dispositions that are crucial to civic decision making in a democratic society. Teachers who are looking for ready-to-use curriculum materials will not find them here, but teachers seeking to advance their own professional development will find a useful resource that will help them to critique whatever curriculum materials they may have and to infuse more critical thinking into their lesson plans.

Conclusion

Most of the supplemental social studies materials available to teachers, whether conventional or computerized, are confined to workbook activities that drill students on disconnected facts or skills. The sources reviewed here, however, provide teachers with ideas and in many cases also with materials to use for engaging students in critical thinking, reasoning, inquiry, problem solving, or decision making about social studies topics. These and other forms of higher order thinking are important for teaching social studies for understanding, appreciation, and application but are often omitted from or minimized in elementary social studies serie

The materials reviewed here vary considerably in nature and scope, and many of them should include a great deal more guidance to the teacher about when and how to use them with students. Some were developed primarily for the secondary grades and would have to be adapted for use in the elementary grades. All of them pose time allocation and curriculum articulation problems, because teachers contemplating using them will have to decide what to omit in order to make space in the curriculum for these supplemental activities and how to insert them into the ongoing flow in ways that will support or at least minimize disruption to curricular cohesion.

In the ideal situation, the distinctive elements offered by these supplemental materials would be systematically incorporated into the major market-share elementary social studies series. If done well, this would maximize the effectiveness of such series in addressing a broader range of goals, and in the process would eliminate the need for supplemental materials of this type. Until such optimal K-6 social studies series are produced, however, distinctive supplemental materials such as those critiqued here will be a valuable resource for teachers interested in teaching social studies for understanding, appreciation, and application. Even if they do not have the time to use the supplemental programs in their entirety or the resources to purchase full sets of materials for all students, teachers stand to benefit considerably from acquiring the instructors' manuals from these materials, studying them carefully, and using selected ideas and activities in their classrooms.

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APPENDIX

Framing Questions

Phase II Study 3: Curriculum Materials Analysis
Framing Questions

A. GOALS

1. Are selective, clear, specific goals stated in terms of student outcomes? Are any important goals omitted? As a set, are the goals appropriate to students' learning needs?

2. Do goals include fostering conceptual understanding and higher order applications of content?

3. To what extent does attainment of knowledge goals imply learning networks of knowledge structured around key ideas in addition to the learning of facts, concepts, and principles or generalizations?

4. What are the relationships between and among conceptual (propositional), procedural, and conditional knowledge goals?

5. To what extent do the knowledge goals address the strategic and metacognitive aspects of processing the knowledge for meaning, organizing it for remembering, and accessing it for application?

6. What attitude and dispositional goals are included?

7. Are cooperative learning goals part of the curriculum?

8. Do the stated goals clearly drive the curriculum (content, activities, assignments, evaluation)? Or does it appear that the goals are just lists of attractive features being claimed for the curriculum or post facto rationalizations for decisions made on some other basis?

B. CONTENT SELECTION

1. Given the goals of the curriculum, is the selection of the content coherent and appropriate? Is there coherence across units and grade levels? (Note: all questions in this section should be answered with the goals in mind.)

2. What is communicated about the nature of the discipline from which the school subject originated?

   a. How does content selection represent the substance and nature of the discipline?

   b. Is content selection faithful to the discipline from which the content is drawn?

   c. What does the relationship among conceptual (propositional), conditional, and procedural knowledge communicate about the nature of the discipline?

3. To what extent were life applications used as a criterion for content selection and treatment? For example, in social studies, is learning how the world works and how it got to be that way emphasized?

4. What prior student knowledge is assumed? Are assumptions justified? Where appropriate, does the content selection address likely student misconceptions?

5. Does content selection reflect consideration for student interests, attitudes, dispositions to learn?

6. Are there any provisions for student diversity (culture, gender, race, ethnicity)?

C. CONTENT ORGANIZATION AND SEQUENCING

1. Given the goals of the curriculum, is the organization of the content coherent and appropriate? Is there coherence across units and grade levels? (Note: All questions in this section should be answered with goals kept in mind.)

2. To what extent is the content organized in networks of information structured in ways to explicate key ideas, major themes, principles, generalizations?

3. What is communicated about the nature of the discipline from which the school subject originates?

   a. How does content organization represent the substance and nature of the discipline?

   b. Is content organization faithful to the discipline from which the content is drawn?

   c. What does the relationship among conceptual (propositional), conditional, and procedural knowledge communicate about the nature of the discipline?

4. How is content sequenced, and what is the rationale for sequencing? For example, is a linear or hierarchical sequence imposed on the content so that students move from isolated and lower level aspects toward more integrated and higher level aspects? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the chosen sequencing compared to other choices that might have been made?

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5. If the content is spiralled, are strands treated in sufficient depth, and in a non-repetitious manner?

D. CONTENT EXPLICATION IN THE TEXT

1. Is topic treatment appropriate?

   a. Is content presentation clear?

   b. If content is simplified for young students, does it retain validity?

   c. How successfully is the content explicated in relation to students' prior knowledge, experience, and interest? Are assumptions accurate?

   d. When appropriate, is there an emphasis on surfacing, challenging, and correcting student misconceptions?

2. Is the content treated with sufficient depth to promote conceptual understanding of key ideas?

3. Is the text structured around key ideas?

   a. Is there alignment between themes/key ideas used to introduce the material, the content and organization of the main body of material, and the points focused on in summaries and review questions at the end?

   b. Are text-structuring devices and formatting used to call attention to key ideas?

   c. Where relevant, are links between sections and units made explicit to students?

4. Are effective representations (e.g., examples, analogies, diagrams, pictures, overheads, photos, maps) used to help students relate content to current knowledge and experience?

   a. When appropriate, are concepts represented in multiple ways?

   b. Are representations likely to hold student interest or stimulate interest in the content?

   c. Are representations likely to foster higher level thinking about the content?

   d. Do representations provide for individual differences?

5. When pictures, diagrams, photos, etc. are used, are they likely to promote understanding of key ideas, or have they been inserted for other reasons? Are they clear and helpful, or likely to be misleading or difficult to interpret?

6. Are adjunct questions inserted before, during, or after the text? Are they designed to promote: memorising; recognition of key ideas; higher order thinking; diverse responses to materials; raising more questions; application?

7. When skills are included (e.g., map skills), are they used to extend understanding of the content or just added on? To what extent is skills instruction embedded within holistic application opportunities rather than isolated as practice of individual skills?

8. To what extent are skills taught as strategies, with emphasis not only on the skill itself but on developing relevant conditional knowledge (when and why the skill would be used) and on the metacognitive aspects of its strategic application?

E. TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS AND CLASSROOM DISCOURSE

1. What forms of teacher-student and student-student discourse are called for in the recommended activities, and by whom are they to be initiated? To what extent does the recommended discourse focus on a small number of topics, wide participation by many students, questions calling for higher order processing of the content?

2. What are the purposes of the recommended forms of discourse?

   a. To what extent is clarification and justification of ideas, critical and creative thinking, reflective thinking, or problem solving promoted through discourse?

   b. To what extent do students get opportunities to explore/explain new concepts and defend their thinking during classroom discourse? What is the nature of those opportunities?

3. Who or what stands out as the authority for knowing? Is the text to be taken as the authoritative and complete curriculum or as a starting place or outline for which the discourse is intended to elaborate and extend it? Are student explanations/ideas and everyday examples elicited?

4. Do recommended activities include opportunities for students to interact with each other (not just the teacher) in discussions, debates, cooperative learning activities, etc.?

V. ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

1. As a set, do the activities and assignments provide students with a variety of activities and opportunities for exploring and communicating their understanding of the content?

   a. Is there an appropriate mixture of forms and cognitive, affective, and/or aesthetic levels of activities?

   b. To what extent do they call for students to integrate ideas or engage in critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, inquiry, decision making, or higher order applications vs. recall of facts & definitions or busy work?

2. As a set, do the activities and assignments amount to a sensible program of appropriately scaffolded progress toward stated goals?

3. What are examples of particularly good activities and assignments, and what makes them good (relevant to accomplishment of major goals, student interest, foster higher level thinking, feasibility and cost effectiveness, likeliness to promote integration and life application of key ideas, etc.)?

   a. Are certain activities or assignments missing that would have added substantially to the value of the unit?

   b. Are certain activities or assignments sound in conception but flawed in design (e.g., vagueness or confusing instruction, invalid assumptions about students' prior knowledge, infeasibility, etc.)?

   c. Are certain activities or assignments fundamentally unsound in conception (e.g., lack relevance, pointless busy work)?

4. To what extent are assignments and activities linked to understanding and application of the content being taught?

   a. Are these linkages to be made explicit to the students to encourage them to engage in the activities strategically (i.e., with metacognitive awareness of goals and strategies)? Are they framed with teacher or student questions that will promote development?

   b. Where appropriate, do they elicit, challenge, and correct misconceptions?

   c. Do students have adequate knowledge and skill to complete the activities and assignments?

5. When activities or assignments involve integration with other subject areas, what advantages and disadvantages does such integration entail?

6. To what extent do activities and assignments call for students to write beyond the level of a single phrase or sentence? To what extent do the chosen forms engage students in higher order thinking?

VI. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

1. Do the recommended evaluation procedures constitute an ongoing attempt to determine what students are coming to know and to provide for diagnosis and remediation?

2. What do evaluation items suggest constitute mastery? To what extent do evaluation items call for application vs. recall?

   a. To what extent are multiple approaches used to assess genuine understanding?

   b. Are there attempts to assess accomplishment of attitudinal or dispositional goals?

   c. Are there attempts to assess metacognitive goals?

   d. Where relevant, is conceptual change assessed?

   e. Are students encouraged to engage in assessment of their own understanding/skill?

3. What are some particularly good assessment items, and what makes them good?

4. What are some flaws that limit the usefulness of certain assessment items (e.g., more than one answer is correct; extended production form, but still asking for factual recall, etc.).

VII. DIRECTIONS TO THE TEACHER

1. Do suggestions to the teacher flow from a coherent and manageable model of teaching and learning the subject matter? If so, to what extent does the model foster higher order thinking?

2. To what extent does the curriculum come with adequate rationale, scope and sequence chart, introductory section that provide clear and sufficiently detailed information about what the program is designed to accomplish and how it has been designed to do so?

3. Does the combination of student text, advice and resources in teachers manual, and additional materials constitute a total package sufficient

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to enable teachers to implement a reasonably good program? If not, what else is needed?

a. Do the materials provide the teacher with specific information about students' prior knowledge (or ways to determine prior knowledge) and likely responses to instruction, questions, activities, and assignments? Does the teachers manual provide guidance about ways to elaborate or follow up on text material to develop understanding?

b. To what extent does the teachers manual give guidance concerning kinds of sustained teacher-student discourse surrounding assignments and activities?

c. What guidance is given to teachers regarding how to structure activities and scaffold student progress during assignment completion, and how to provide feedback following completion?

d. What kind of guidance is given to the teacher about grading or giving credit to participating in classroom discourse, work on assignments, performance on tests, or other evaluation techniques?

e. Are suggested materials accessible to the teacher?

4. What content and pedagogical knowledge is required for the teacher to use this curriculum effectively?

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